

MEL “DUTCH” AND JEAN DERICKSON,
2650 Oxford-Millville Rd. 523-8481, # 9

Mel and Jean were married by Edwin Fairman in the Seminary Church in 1952. They have been married 67 years.

Mel grew up on a farm, working with his father managing a herd of dairy cattle. As such he was given a deferment during the early years of WWII. But by 1945 he was drafted into the service and sent to Oakland, California for basic training. After he finished basic training, he was given a leave to come home before being shipped out. The war with Japan ended while he was home visiting his parents.

Nonetheless, the Army still wanted him for service, so he was recalled and eventually sent to the Philippines, where he caught Malaria and spent a month in the hospital. While in the hospital, he met a fellow who had gone to school with his brother. He volunteered to get Mel transferred to the Quartermaster's unit while he was in the Philippines. So, Mel served the rest of his time in the Quartermaster's Corps.

When Mel finally returned to the US, he planned to return to his family's farm. As he was settling down, he went to a basketball game at Hanover High. There he noticed a very attractive cheerleader who later became his wife, Jean. She had been alerted to Mel's return by her father, who had met him at a farm implement show. Her father told Jean that Mel looked like a talented and honest young man whom she might want to know.

Jean was still in high school and had lots of activities on her plate at that time. She was planning to go to New York where she had been accepted in modeling school. In fact, Jean and her mother did go to New York in preparation for a career in modeling, but before they got there, Jean decided that New York was not for her. So, they turned right around and came back. Her mother was delighted with her decision, as was Mel.

In 1952 Mel and Jean were married and they have been together ever since. They have enjoyed great happiness together and great sorrow. Their first son died in childbirth. Their only daughter, Joy, died of cystic fibrosis at age 18. Yet they consider themselves blessed that their second son, Tim and his wife, Kelly, live next to them in their former house, when Tim is not in Columbus at his job as Assistant Director of Agriculture for Ohio. Tim and Kelly's daughter, Katherine Joy Noble, lives in Middletown with her husband, David Noble, and with Mel and Jean's two great-grandsons: John Timothy Noble and Henry Oliver Noble. Tim

and Kelly's son, Matthew John Derickson, lives in Lebanon with his wife, Megan. Matthew is an engineer while Megan is a nurse.

After Mel and Jean's marriage, Mel continued farming. He first established himself on Dunwoody Road, working for Joe Ayers. After three years he bought his own land and began his own farm. He raised corn, wheat, and soybeans and ran a dairy with about 118 cows. He continued dairy farming until about 1980 when the federal government had a dairy buyout and bought his herd and those of the other dairies around. It was very difficult for Mel to say goodbye to his herd after so many years.

Four years after this buy-out, Mel was approached by real estate agents who wanted to build a golf course on his land. This proved to be initially a losing proposition when the clubhouse burned down with Mel holding the mortgage on the course. But it eventually worked out when the course was sold to local investors and put on a profitable basis.

Mel had good luck with his farm in other ways. Shortly after he bought the farm, he was approached by Gulf Oil Company, which wanted land on which to build a filling station. He was happy to sell them the corner plot. Later, the electric company bought 10 acres and later 3 more acres for a sub-station. Farming was supplemented by land development and the family prospered.

In the meantime, Jean had her own career. After deciding that New York was not for her, she returned to Hamilton and worked for the County Treasurer for several years. Then after her children had grown, she began working for Baldwin Piano and Organ Company, teaching organ. The company had a program that with the sale of each organ, they supplied a course of 10 lessons. Jean was the teacher. She taught for 10 years. Then she took over the management of one of the Baldwin Stores. Eventually, she managed and did sales training in several other stores as well. After 10 years of managing these stores, she became the organist for Eaton Manor, in Hamilton, on Friday and Saturday night. She played there for 10 years as well. Following this, she spent the next 10 years helping her son and daughter-in-law run the Colonial Wood Furniture store which was located on the corner of their property.

After 10 years doing that, she felt it was time to retire. But she still plays both her grand piano and her electric organ, which is much appreciated by her Presbyterian Women's Circle members.

Mel and Jean Derickson are delightful and interesting people who have lived prosperous and productive lives. They are both 50-year members of the Oxford Presbyterian Church. Jean served as Elder in the church while Mel was an usher

for 20 years. They have both devoted much of their lives to the Oxford Presbyterian Church, and they feel themselves blessed with their lives together.

Arly Allen