

## ***Charles & Evelyn Williams***

**55 YEARS AGO - July 4th, 1951 - AT THE ROCKVALE PICNIC**



Evelyn & Charles at this year's Rockvale Picnic

Tuesday, July 4, 2006, was a day for Charles & Evelyn Bryant Williams, to reminisce of this date in 1950. They met for the first time at "The Rockvale Picnic" which was the biggest thing happening in our neighborhood. "Hurry and get the potatoes dug, so we can go to the picnic."

Evelyn's most exciting thing was roller skating in the old gym, no matter how hot it was, and eating hamburgers, which you couldn't have any time you wanted. What a treat! But this year was a little different. She didn't know how this day was going to change her life!

After the potatoes were dug, she and her aunt would go to the picnic. She notices a girl friend sitting in the car with a cute little guy; goes over to talk with her while she eats her hamburger and gets ready to skate. She wasn't interested in the guy, but when he said, "that looks good, how about going over to the stand and getting us a burger and drink?" Of course Evelyn said, "OK." He gives her the money and she brings the food to them and then she goes on to the gym to skate.

A few months later on a Saturday afternoon, a mutual friend Curtis (Dago) Smotherman and Charles stopped by Evelyn's house on their way to Murfreesboro. She was outside, so they talked a few minutes and the boys went on to the big city to ride around and around the square. What else was there to do?

A few weeks later Charles stopped by Evelyn's house, (no phones) and asked her to go to the movies with him. She had to ask her parents, Ernest and Beulah Bryant. Evelyn was only 15 at the time. Her parents said, "yes, but had to be home by ten o'clock" and they were.

The next week the Old Leb Methodist church teens were going skating at the Shelbyville skating rink. Several teenagers in the community attended Old Leb, including Charles. Some of the girls invited Evelyn to go along, so off to the skating rink. They were piled in a pick-up truck with a topper on it. It was getting into wintertime and sitting close together was fine. Especially coming home sitting next to Charles and holding hands.



Charles & Evelyn shortly after their wedding day



Evelyn's parents knew Charles parents, Jim T. and Mary Williams of Link. That helped a little! Charles and Evelyn dated all winter, sometimes going to town and going to Red Rose and eating a hamburger and milkshake, but Evelyn's dad thought they were getting too serious. He told her, "she couldn't go with him anymore unless she went out with other friends going along," so one night they planned a night out. Charles had a friend to pick up Evelyn and meet him some place and they would go to the "Starlite Drive-in or just ride around. At 10 o'clock he would take her home and her parents would already be in bed. This finally got old so they decided it was time for them to get married.

The Midland Baptist Church teens were having a hayride on Saturday night, June 7th, 1952. Charles' plans were for a friend, James Jacob Morton, to pretend he was going to be taking Evelyn to the hayride. Just before dark, Mr. & Mrs. Bryant go to Midland Store to play rook, a Saturday night ritual. Evelyn is left at home waiting for her date. She packs her clothes and waits for James Morton to come. When he arrives she tells

him what their plans are but he knows nothing about it. Charles had not filled James in on all of the details, because he thought he might not want to get involved. He was very upset and said, "If you do that, I will never come and pick you up again". Charles had made plans for Sam Pinkston (his brother-in-law) and a neighbor (Clarence Cunningham) to take them to Rossville, Georgia, to get married.

Things worked out OK. They all arrived in Rossville at about 1 o'clock AM, got the Justice of the Peace out of bed and were married, even though he thought Evelyn was a little young. He asked her how old she was and she said, "18". He said "you look a little young", but he married them anyway, and took either \$2 or \$4 dollars and said, "til death do ye part."

Charles had some boys go up to Mr. Bryant's house around midnight to tell him they had gone to get married. He was upset as any parent would be, but after awhile he got over it. Mr. Bryant's brother, Charlie, had worked with Charles and gave him a good name and that helped a lot.



Daughters, Mary Ann and Kathy - Christmas 1961

Charles and Evelyn moved to Mr. Bryant's rental house and farmed for him for two years. By this time their first daughter, Kathy, was born. Times were hard and Charles went to work for Roscoe Brown's Heating & Air. Then their second daughter, Mary Ann was born. After five years with Roscoe Brown, he went to General Electric and retired from there in 1985.

Their daughter, Kathy is married to Carl Davis of Christiana. They have two children, Kim and Jason. Kim is married to Chris Wilkinson of Christiana. They have three children, Carly, Eli and Dylan.

Their daughter, Mary Ann is married to Mike Ryan, son of Margaret Ryan of Eagleville and they have two boys, Phillip and Stephen.



Charles & Evelyn, still working on the farm

Charles and Evelyn says time has passed SO FAST. Fifty-four years of marriage on June 8, 2006. They are still active on the farm, with cattle to keep them busy, but they count their blessings. They have been blessed beyond measure and they thank God.

***JUST LOOK WHAT ROCKVALE PICNIC'S CAN DO FOR YOU !!***