



First Baptist Kids News Discovery Club

George and Laura Smith Celebrate 52 Years of Marriage!

On Tuesday, March 25, Esther and Rebekah Weeks, along with Miss Carolyn, visited George and Laura Smith. Everyone sat around their big, round kitchen table and chatted and had tea and cookies. The time went by quickly as we heard stories of their lives. When we told Mr. Smith why we were there, he immediately began telling us about his life. He said he wasn't a Christian when he started working at the Foundry and he only worked there for the money. We found out that after high school, he went into the Navy during the time of the Korean War. He worked in the Psyche Ward in St. Albans, NY.

Mrs. Smith was born at home in Burlington while Mr. Smith lived in Florence during their young years. "George still considers me a transient because I wasn't born here" Miss Laura grinned.

When Mr. And Mrs. Smith were young, both of them went to Sunday School and Church. Mr. Smith went to the Methodist Church in Florence and Miss Laura went to the Presbyterian Church in Burlington.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith were married on March 24, 1956 and saved in June, 1956. They attended other churches for a few months after their marriage but settled in at First Baptist. We thank God for their decision. Laura let us know they were saved at the same time. They heard a special speaker, George Sweeting, and both went to the altar.

While we talked about Mr. Smith's years at First Baptist, he gleamed. We heard he'd done everything from sweeping the floors to being a Deacon. In the "old days" he was the Leader/Treasurer of the Boy's Brigade. Also, he was Sunday School Superintendent for lots of years — at least 15

or more years. Mr. Smith taught Sunday School from the time he joined the Church until he could no longer do it because of his health. He taught children of all ages and many are adult members of our Church now.

Mrs. Smith was affiliated with Pioneer Girls. There were three Managers and she was one of them. Mrs. Smith said during those years, the Church was their social center and they were there all the time. She also taught Sunday School for kids 2 to 4 years old for about ten years. As we know, Mrs. Smith was also Church Clerk for years and had many other positions that she failed to mention while we were there.



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We learned that Mr. Smith loved to fish with Bob Panaro. In fact, Bob Panaro was Mr. Smith's Boy Scout Leader as a child.

Mr. Smith loves cowboy movies and his favorite radio program was Inner Sanctum. Mrs. Smith's favorite TV show is Wheel of Fortune and her favorite radio program was Lux Theater. Of course, Mrs. Smith still loves to read her "romantic" novels when she gets a chance. Mr.

Smith enjoyed his books on history and of course reading the Bible. He also enjoyed his garden as a hobby.

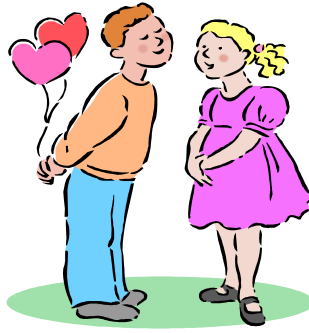
Mr. And Mrs. Smith

Mrs. Smith grew up in a strict home. Her mother was a homemaker and her father a tailor. Miss Laura had 3 brothers and 1 sister. She attended a four room school house and went home for lunch every day. Esther found out she was never home schooled. She finished high school and attended college. She told Rebekah that she did not play sports when she was young because (1) they didn't have sports for girls back then and (2) she always had to go straight home after school. She confided that she hated Sundays because they were not allowed to do anything except sit and be still all day. That's how it was back then. She remembered that they only had one toy at Christmas and none for birthdays. They had a birthday cake but no presents.

Miss Laura laughed that they had a bathroom when she was growing up but Mr. Smith had a bathroom but no tub. He took Saturday night baths in a big galvanized tub in the kitchen. In the winter, it was too cold to take baths in the bathroom because of the lack of heat.

Mr. Smith grew up in a small home with 13 kids—7 boys and 6 girls. When he was young, he worked on a farm. After high school, he worked at the Foundry before going into the Navy. He started as an office boy and worked his way up after returning to the Foundry after service. He worked there for 45 years before retiring.

Mr. Smith recalls buying his first car when he finished high school. He said "they were good cars." "We were wild in those days," he laughed. We were all amazed that Mrs. Smith's family never had a car.



Rebekah asked what she thought when Mr. Smith threw her into the ocean. (This is the tale we'd heard regarding the beginning of their courtship.) Mrs. Smith laughed. "I loved it!" she said, "I pretended to hate it, but I loved it." They were married on March 24, 1956. They have two daughters, Laura and Jennifer and three granddaughters, Charina, Alexa and Gina. Miss Laura will be 79 years old in August and Mr. Smith is 77 years old on April 8. Mrs. Smith laughed that "George said he married me so I could collect Social Security first."

We had to find out the first President Mrs. Smith remembered. She had already given this some thought because we had asked this on our other interviews and she was ready. Herbert Hoover was President when they were born and she first remembers FDR—Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Miss Laura told us we are celebrating her favorite season, Spring, now. Mr. Smith said his favorite season was Winter and he liked the snow but Mrs. Smith lovingly disagreed with him. She said "George, you don't like Winter," but he argued, "Yes I do."

When asked if Mr. Smith had one thing he wanted to say to the kids,

Miss Laura told us he always told them "All you have to do is say NO to wrong things and always be able and willing to give your testimony to other kids."

Laura wants kids to just remember "God is faithful and Jesus is the same today and forever."

Mrs. Smith's favorite memory verse is Colossians 4:2 "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;"

Mr. Smith's favorite memory verse is 2 Timothy 3: 14 "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;"

The Discovery Club wants to thank Mr. And Mrs. Smith for the time and the fond memories they shared with us. The look in their eyes tell of their love and devotion to each other and the love they have for the Lord and this Church. Their lives have centered around "their Church" and we are all grateful. We are thankful they cared and participated in so many activities and held so many offices. Our hearts are all lifted when we see them walk into Sunday morning worship service.

Thank you, Mr. And Mrs. Smith, for your love and service to First Baptist Church of Florence!

