



By Carolyn Lee
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Two sisters and a brother and their spouses all grew up in the Imperial area and have all just or will be celebrating marriages of over 60 years this Thanksgiving.

That's a lot to be thankful for.

The siblings are Wava Daschofsky, Shirley Smith and Frank Clements.

Wava and husband Calvin were married Oct. 22, 1947. Shirley and husband Stan were married Dec. 3, 1946, and Frank and wife Alice were married Nov. 23, 1948.

Let's see, that makes the Smiths at 66 years, the Daschofskys at 65 years and the Clements at 64 years.

Stan and Shirley met during classes at Chase County High School. He had gone to a country grade school, while she attended school in town.

They dated for three years, then decided it was time to get married.

With Calvin and Wava as attendants, the Smiths went to the Imperial Methodist Church parsonage, had the pastor perform the ceremony, then "went to Shirley's folks to have supper and that was it," Stan remembered.

Back in those days, Wava and Shirley said, there wasn't as much of a fuss made about the wedding ceremony as there is today.

The Daschofskys also met at Chase County High School and dated for five years. They both came from farm families—Wava from the Clements farm where Frank and Alice now live, and Calvin from near Imperial.

When they decided it was time to get married, they drove to the Imperial Methodist Church, but the pastor was out of town. So, with the Smiths standing up for them, they were married by Rev. Martin of the Episcopal Church.

Following the ceremony, Wava's parents had a party for them.

Both couples honeymooned in Denver for a few days, and then it was back to farming.

Frank and Alice met on a blind date on the Fourth of July during high school. The Smiths and Daschofskys always went to the celebration, and they wanted Frank to go. Alice said they thought he would be more inclined to attend if she was there.

The blind date didn't last too long, though, as Alice had plans to go dancing with June Curtis Sharp afterwards. However, she wrote him a letter, he still seemed interested and they eventually decided to get married.

Their wedding was not as easy to plan as the Smiths and Daschofskys, though. They wanted a church wedding, but every time they set a date something happened.

First, Frank's grandfather died. Then, a house they were moving onto the family farm to live in wasn't finished.

Next, a blizzard hit.

They eventually were able to hold the wedding, but on their way to Cheyenne, Wyo. for a honeymoon, they became snowed in at Ogallala, where they spent the rest of the honeymoon.

Before they were married, Shirley Smith worked at the county superintendent and welfare

offices. Afterwards, she prepared meals for Stan, his brothers and the hired men on the family farm west of Imperial.

Wava worked at the county ASCS office when first married, then helped Calvin on his family farm.

“We came up the hard way,” she reminisced. They first rented a little farm, then built a little house on the family farm in 1950, then built a bigger house.

“We just kept working at it, buying land. We still live here,” she said recently.

Alice taught at rural schools before she and Frank married, then helped on the farm and worked at JC Penney’s.

Hard work on the farm seems to be a common theme of the three couples’ lives. They attribute, in part, their long marriages to that.

“We worked hard and didn’t have a chance to argue,” Wava laughed. “We were both from farms, both liked farming and helped each other out the best we could.”

With a twinkle in his eye, Stan attributed his long marriage to the fact that “I’m so easy to get along with.” Shirley said “No!”

She added, “We were way out in the country. We were so busy working we didn’t have time for anything else.”

Alice attributes her long marriage to Frank to having to “give and take. We’re not always right. We work together.”

As for the give and take, Alice loved to square dance. She made a deal with Frank that if she helped him shock feed, he’d go square dancing with her.

The Smiths have two children, Jane and Clyde. Daschofskys have two daughters, Joyce and Joan. Clements have three children: Scott, Linda and Diane.

The Clements siblings’ oldest sister is Lois Siefken, a resident of Imperial Manor.

The Smiths and Daschofskys enjoy playing pitch together and traveling on day trips. The Clementses still hit the square dance nights.

And what are they thankful for? Shirley said, “That we can do things together.” Wava qualified, “That we’re still ABLE to do things together!”