



Eula Petite

Eula received her education at Monmouth Normal School where she received two years of education training. After teaching elementary education for four years she received a Life Education Certificate.

She taught elementary students in many of the local schools, including Cloverleaf, the Agency school, Grand Ronde, Gold Creek and Willamina.

Eula says she really enjoyed teaching. "There are so many I'm proud of," says Eula about the students she taught. Perhaps her most notable one is Barbara Roberts, who is now Secretary of State for Oregon. Eula retired from teaching in 1970.

Eula recalls her parents speaking chinook. It was something she picked up from them. Since about 1978, Eula has spent some of her time conducting Chinook Language classes.

Eula has a long history of being involved with tribal activities. Since age 18, she has served from time to time on the Grand Ronde Tribal Council. John and her regularly attend tribal activities and she enjoys sharing old tribal photographs.

Eula has enjoyed opportunities to travel to such places as Alaska, Mexico, and South America. Today she enjoys working with a variety of crafts such as making God's Eyes, Indian designed basketry from yarn and raffia and making Indian dolls made of flour dough, painted and dressed in buckskin and wearing beaded necklaces and other items.

On the living room wall hangs two paintings of a white house standing behind trees in fall colors of orange, yellow and red. The picture set was acquired when they were first married in 1937.

Perhaps their hardest time together was during the depression when they were first married. After paying off bills, three dollars was your spending money back then, said Eula.

During the depression, there was no work in the woods so John had to work at a rock quarry at Government Camp on Mt. Hood. They had to live in a tent, but enjoyed fishing and picking huckleberries in the mountains.

After retiring, the two raised cattle. They started with one jersey cow which they raised from a calf. John

couldn't stand to eat it, so they traded it to a meat cutter for butchered beef, said Eula. They then bought a little white face holstein calf and from her offspring raised as many as 16 cattle at a time, said Eula. When John suffered his stroke, the couple ended their cattle raising.

The two remember when there was a lake in the McPherson Road area of Grand Ronde. John would go hunting for geese there. When the lake was drained, the Indians used the area as a horse race track and played shinny on the dry lakebed said Eula.

After school the boys would go out and play shinny. It was a pretty rough game, said Eula. The shinny sticks were made out of wood. Eula still has one her father made. He also carved the shinny balls, said Eula.

The two met through their families who were good friends of each others. John was also a good friend of Eula's brother.

What has made their marriage last through 51 years?

Their mutual respect for each other, their sense of humor, similar interests and their religion have kept them together, said Eula. The two have especially enjoyed their trips abroad and their fishing trips to the mountains together, said Eula.

But other things have also made their marriage successful.

"I'm a strong person. I am a good boss," says Eula with humor. "I'm a good boss," John returns with equal jest.



John and Eula Petite unwrap gifts during 50th anniversary.