



John and Florence Betteridge celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary. Inset, the couple on their wedding day.

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It's 70 years of wedded bliss for ex-mayor and mayoress

By Paul Kemp
News reporter

A FORMER Tamworth mayor and mayoress have celebrated their platinum wedding anniversary – after 70 years of marriage.

John and Florence Betteridge celebrated the milestone anniversary on Tuesday.

John, aged 91, and Florence, aged 88, were married in 1940. John, who was serving with the Staffordshire Regiment at the time, had been given 24 hours off for the ceremony before returning to duty.

John went on to work in the clay industry in Polesworth, and the couple later ran two pubs – the Hopwas British

Legion and the Suffield Lodge Working Men's Club, in Tamworth.

The couple were mayor and mayoress in 1964.

Following his unanimous election as mayor in May that year John said the town had a great past and a wonderful future.

As reported on the front page of the Herald on May 29, 1964, John acknowledged the town's problem of traffic and narrow streets and new boundary extensions.

"We must all push for all we are worth for the new by-pass and ring road as measures to alleviate the traffic problem," he told the council following his inauguration.

"I am also concerned with the problem of entertainment for the young and old and with the development of the town centre."

He added: "I am confident that with goodwill and mutual desire to do the best possible for all the people that Tamworth will take up the challenge."

"We can look forward to a most exciting future."

At the meeting Councillor Edwin Collins described John as a man who was sincere,

determined and scrupulously fair. The couple went on to have five children, 12 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild.

John and Florence held their anniversary celebration at Tamworth and District Day Centre with family and friends.



John and Florence when they were Mayor and Mayoress of Tamworth in 1964.

Couple marry in midst of the war

SOME notable events in 1940, the year John and Florence tied the knot are:

- January – Food rationing begins in Great Britain during World War Two;
- February – Comedian Jimmy Tarbuck is born;
- March – Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini agree to form

- July – Bugs Bunny makes his cartoon debut in the Oscar-award winning *A Wild Hare*;
- August – Winston Churchill pays tribute to the Royal Air Force by uttering the immortal words: "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few";
- September – The Blitz begins

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