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PLATTSBURGH—Thriving marriages take time to cultivate, requires respect and a sense of humor according to The Barrnet’s, who practiced it nearly three-quarters of a century.

George and Grace Barrnet married 74 years ago in 1937. George was a young man fresh out of college. Grace was a year younger than George at 22 years old, with an agricultural degree.

“We met in college. She studied cooking and dietary things. I was studying for a Master of Science. That’s kinda how we got hooked up,” George said.

“I’ll never forget the night, the uh night Grace and I had been going some, (George referring to his and Grace’s dating back then) we were kissing and visiting, then we ran and hid out of sight because we had seen the old lady Grace rented a room from coming by in her cotton night dress to lock the door. She then went up the stairs. Grace and I snickered and then we did a little more business,” George said laughing.

George used to drive all the way from Crown Point to Pen Yan, south of Geneva to see Grace when they were dating.

After the couple graduated things happened fast, Grace had a job all set up at the Windsor hotel down in New York City, but George didn’t like the idea of her moving away from him.

“You don’t want to go down there, you had better marry me,” George said and that’s how their life together began.

Nearly three-quarters of a century later, now at ages 97 and 96, (they look much younger) George still holds Grace’s hand and Grace still smiles when she looks over at her husband, just as they have throughout their marriage from the beginning according to George. They believe the success of their marriage is because of

communication and respect.

“But I remember one time about nine years into our marriage Grace said, ‘Sometimes I could just kill him,’ to a friend,” George said. They always worked it out and got over what was bothering them at the time, he said. Sometimes they went to bed angry, but George advises against it. It’s better if you don’t, he said.

“Keep your temper and don’t be a nagger, that’s my advice to couples and especially to newlyweds,” George said. He believes having a sense of humor helps in a marriage too.

Grace didn’t talk much when they were married, George said. He did most of the talking and she did most of the listening. Their marriage wasn’t dull he said. They traveled to almost every state in the United States and played a lot of pinochle with other couples.

“There’s nobody like Grace,” George said smiling, and then he reached for his wife’s hand, giving her an adoring look. She’s a very special partner, he said once more.

George explained why he thought he was fortunate for having such an amazing life with Grace. She’s always been stylish, smart, fun, and gave birth to two good-looking children, Faith and George. Plus she’s an exceptional cook too, he said.

“She’s a whale of a good cook. That makes a huge difference...She made a Western sandwich I used to like pretty well,” George said.

George kept a picture of Grace sitting on his bureau. It was the last thing he saw before leaving for work, he said with tears in his Caribbean blue eyes. He then glances over at Grace lovingly.

“Have you always lived in Plattsburgh with Grace?”

“Well I never lived with anyone else in Plattsburgh but Grace,” and he laughed.

Before their photo was taken he asks,

“How is her hair? Is it combed?”

“Mr.Barnet she looks beautiful,” Ray Wright, activities assistant said.

“Oh ok alright,” George said.

“They’re still together every day. They eat lunch and dinner together almost every day. George asks for Grace a good bit throughout the day.” Wright said.

The couple currently resides at the Clinton County Nursing Home.

