



Edwin Monteith holding a single red rose for his wife, Sylvia.  
The couple are residents of Orange Senior.

## Senior Spotlight: Still In Love After Nearly 50 Years

She affectionately refers to her husband as “Pops” and says their fate was sealed by a couple of letters he mailed her nearly 50 years ago.

“He first wanted to know my ring size. The next letter asked if I would marry him,” said Sylvia Monteith, who has been married to her husband, Edwin for 47 years.

The couple, both natives of Jamaica, have lived in New Community’s Orange Senior residence since it first opened back in 2003. In honor of Valentine’s Day, they reminisced about their life-long romance and what has kept them together for so long—through sickness and in times of good health.

“We just enjoy each other. I don’t like quarreling or fussing,” said Sylvia, 74, a diabetic who suffers from heart and kidney problems. “We promised to stay with one another. I don’t like the idea of people getting married and then parting.”

Edwin Monteith, 81, a man of few words whose poor circulation led to a foot amputation, says he was attracted to his wife initially because “she reminded me of my mother.” He also admits she is a very good cook, adding one of his favorite dishes is cow’s feet.

The couple actually grew up on the same street back home in Montego Bay. As a young man in his 20s, Monteith then left Jamaica to do farming in Florida and New York. But thoughts of the girl he called “Syl” were ever present. That’s when he wrote her two letters—one asking for her ring size and the next asking for her hand in marriage.

They would eventually have nine children together. Their oldest son, Winston, is now deceased. They also have 18 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

“I thank God for them,” said Sylvia Monteith of her grands and great-grands. “They love me and I love them.”

Like most couples their age, the Monteiths have also settled into a daily routine. They get up, dress and wait for a van to take them to a local adult medical day care program, where they receive both breakfast and lunch. Edwin Monteith also plays dominoes, while his wife enjoys arts and crafts, bingo and shopping excursions.

Sundays is reserved for church services at First United Tabernacle in Orange, where they both worship. The couple and those who know them believe that their faith has contributed to their long relationship. Some see them as a real example.

“I have seen this couple stick together in bad times, when things are going wrong with their health, and they have shown a great deal of strength and love for each other,” said Rachel Manyange, care coordinator at Orange Senior.

Around the building, she said the Monteiths are always there to “listen and give advice” to others and are a real example of unity.

“They are well liked,” she said.