

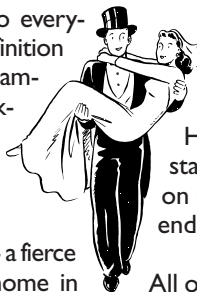


**"When you look at your life, the greatest happinesses are family happinesses."** ~Joyce Brothers

## True Love, Wildwood Style

By Jessica Westerland

Love means something different to everyone. However, if you look up the definition of love, you will see things like "enamored with" or "great affection and liking for," "a strong positive emotion of regard with affection," "a feeling of warm personal attachment."



Al and Mary Lou Trottnow have love- a fierce love of each other and of their home in North Wildwood. Over the years their love for each other developed and deepened, all the while their attachment and love of the Wildwoods did also.

August 26, 2010 will be their 60th wedding anniversary, and they are still "just getting to know each other" as Mary Lou likes to laugh. "We got married when we were 21, in 1950," Mary Lou explained. "Al weighed 130 pounds, he looked like a dart!" They grew up together in Philadelphia, where they started dating each other in their senior years of high school. Al attended La Salle high school, and Mary Lou went to St. Hubert's high school where she was the president of her senior class.

One of the constants in Mary Lou and Al's lives has always been coming down to Wildwood. They began visiting Wildwood in the mid 1940's before they were dating, and continued to come back through their dating, and their marriage.

Every summer and whenever they could, Mary Lou and Al, as well as kids from other Philly neighborhoods would come down to Wildwood to dance and relax. "We would hop a bus, or hop a train and just go." They were always drawn to Magnolia Ave, what they called "Mag and the Flag," an area on the beach they went to at the end of Magnolia that was marked by a large flagpole. Mary Lou and Al, as well as their friends saw many entertainers, including Steve Gibson and the Redcaps, Jerry Vale, the Treniers and Screamin' Jay Hawkins. He played a mean saxophone and was famous for literally screaming lyrics and jumping off of the stage, occasionally startling some of the audience into a faint!

Mary Lou and Al loved dancing at the Bang Bang, which was on Oak Ave. and the Boardwalk. Mary Lou and Al also enjoyed Aunt Rose's Donuts on the boardwalk, "they were heavy sinkers." They would usually stay in Mrs. Cavanaugh's Boarding House on W Wildwood Ave. She would even let them stay for free Memorial Day weekend, as long as they always came back to her boarding house and told all their friends. The regular price was \$1.50 per night per person.

When asked what one of their most memorable times was, they will both answer that every time they came to Wildwood was a memorable one. However, one particular memory that stands out for Mary Lou is that she was on the boardwalk the day World War II ended in August of 1945.

All of their visits to Wildwood developed their relationship with each other as well as their bond to this island. They bought several properties in 1967, on 24th Street. They continued to live in Philadelphia, but came "down the shore" like other summer folks, to work and relax during the summer season. Al enjoyed being a bartender at Moore's for 22 years. As they had children and grew older, they brought their children down with them and they worked summer jobs like selling papers and busing tables and developed a love of the island as well. Mary Lou and Al moved to Pine Ave in North Wildwood permanently in 1990.

"Wildwood was the place everyone went to as teens; we never had a desire to go to any other place. Most of the neighborhoods in Philadelphia went to Wildwood. We knew Wildwood," Mary Lou stated and Al agreed. "We knew when we bought property in 1967 that we were going to live here [permanently] someday. We have sand in our toes; we just knew we wanted to live here."

Many people complain about the noise, the raucous people, events and environment in Wildwood. Other folks prefer quieter places like Ocean City or Avalon, but not the Trottnows. They love their view out of their condominium on Pine Ave. in North Wildwood. They can wake up to the view of the sun slowly peering over the ocean right out of their sliding glass doors, Al is proud to explain. Any loud people or crazy going-ons are merely common place and even entertainment to them.

Wildwood is firmly embedded in their hearts and life, and they also passed their love of the island on to their 7 children, Albert, Marianne, Richard, Mark, Lynne, David and Meg. Several of their children own homes in North Wildwood, and all of them visit Mary Lou and Al frequently, enabling them to also visit with their 12 grandchildren and 3 great-grandsons. For a time the Trottnows had a house in the Poconos, because they enjoyed skiing. They would ski in the winter, but then they decided to try a visit to the mountains in the summer. However their roots were so firmly planted in Wildwood, the beach and the boardwalk that



May 15, 2010 ~The Trottnow family flocked to North Wildwood for the special occasion in celebration of Al & Mary Lou's 60th Wedding Anniversary.



The day Albert proposed to Mary Lou.



True love forever.



Al & Mary Lou on left with their 7 children. Standing L-R Albert, Richard, Mark and David. Sitting L-R Marianne, Lynne and Meg





**"A father's goodness is higher than the mountains; a mother's goodness is deeper than the sea."** ~Japanese Proverb



**Mary Lou & Al Trottnow** Atlantic City 1948



**Bob Godshall & Albert Trottnow**  
Wildwood 1946

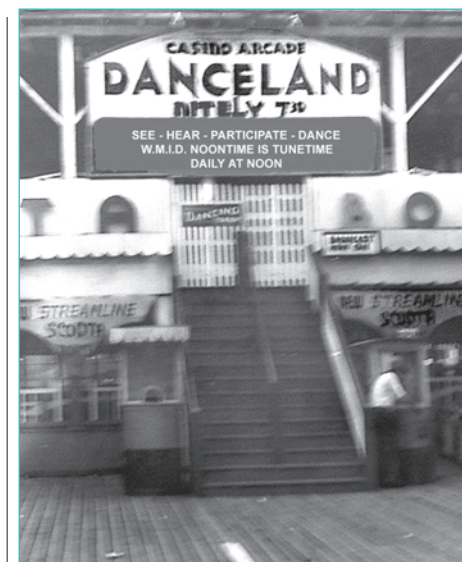


PHOTO Courtesy of Wildwood Historic Society

## ... Wildwood Days

Back when learning how to swim was as easy as being thrown in the water and someone yelling "swim!"... when you wore your best clothes and polished your shoes along with curling or greasing your hair to go out dancing at the Starlight Ballroom or the Bang-Bang (above) at the Casino Arcade... (where Al & MaryLou Trottnow danced!) when there were no seatbelts in cars, or bicycle helmets to wear, and no safety seals on containers, when you would leave home in the morning and play all day and get back in time for dinner and no one could reach you on a cell phone... there were no lawsuits because no one was to blame but yourself if you fell and got hurt... you drank water from the garden hose instead of a bottle... ate cakes and ice cream, and drank cream sodas without gaining weight because you were always outside playing or walking or riding your bicycle.

Times have changed but some things remain the same here in the Wildwoods... we still claim the biggest, cleanest, beaches in the country with the most powdery, white sand. Our beach continues to be among the few FREE beaches left on the Jersey Shore. Wildwood has the World famous Boardwalk (aka 2 Miles of Smiles.) It has the one and only Sightseer Tram Car, a battery operated tram which has been carrying people from one end of the "Boards" to the other for over 50 years, with its ever-infamous warning by Floss Stingel, "Watch the Tram Car Please!" The musical melting place of Wildwood by-the-sea also boasts the title "The Birthplace of Rock n Roll", since the first hit "Rock Around the Clock" was written and sung by Bill Haley and the Comets at the Hoffbrau Hotel in 1954. And certainly not last, although we'll end it here, Wildwood continues to live up to the words of its signature song sung by Bobby Rydell, "Every day's a holiday and every night's a Saturday night" with its larger than ever, action packed schedule of events.

Enjoy all that Wildwood in the summer has to offer.  
~Dorothy



**Mary Lou & Al**  
Philadelphia 1947



**Al & Mark~ Al & Mary Lou's 4th child**  
1964

the kids declared "Uh-uh, we aren't coming here anymore."

When their perplexed friends from Philadelphia asked them why they would want to live here year round, and what they did down here all winter long, Mary Lou defended the Wildwoods to the end. She simply explained that she does during the week the same thing anyone in Philadelphia does, and they go out on the weekends just like everyone else. "The only difference is, we are driving 25 mph and you are driving 55 and 65 mph! You get used to the slower pace down here, and the older you get the more you appreciate it. We would never move back to Philadelphia."

Mary Lou and Al take care of each other, and enjoy living in North Wildwood to the fullest. They have dates every week where they grab a bite to eat and enjoy the camaraderie of FlipFlopz, Keenan's, Westy's or the Elks, and for dinner: Piro's & Alfe's. They live

their lives to the fullest. They are both feisty, witty, active people who are constantly smiling. They take vacations with their children, and look forward to their children's family visits to them where they move around all the furniture in their condominium to accommodate as many people as possible.

Many people love deeply, but you would never know to look at them. One of the most wonderful things about the Trottnows, is that their love and affection for each other and their fondness and attachment to their home in North Wildwood is obvious, proclaimed, and tangible. It barely takes 10 minutes in their company to see and appreciate their bond, and for them to share their attachment and stories about the island with you. They exemplify the definitions of love, and they leave a loving and lasting impression.



Jessica Westerland graduated Valedictorian of ACCC in 2007, and went on to Rowan University to graduate in 2009 with a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism. She is enjoying her first freelance stint with The Sun. She is employed as a teller with TD Bank in Wildwood. You may know her as 'the girl with the long hair.'