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MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM F. Bertram, 275 Geneva av., were greeted by friends and former pupils of Mr. Bertram at an open house Sunday marking their 50th wedding anniversary. Bertram, a teacher at Immanuel Lutheran school, has been teaching for over 50 years, 35 of them at the Elmhurst school.

(Press Publications Photo)

Elmhurst Resident Starts Second Half Century As Teacher

By STEVE J. SARICH

There's a lot of mileage behind the career of William F. Bertram, who has started his second half century as a teacher and still going strong at 74.

For almost half of his life time—35 years to be precise—Bertram has been teaching at Immanuel Lutheran church school, Third av. and Illinois st., Elmhurst; and that's a mighty good record for anybody's report card.

Back in 1929 when the country was caught in the jaws of a depression, the septuagenarian and his "bride" then of 15 years came to Elmhurst as teacher and principal of the school.

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BERTRAM was not a stranger to his new surroundings 35 years years ago. Seventeen years earlier, he was a student at Addison Lutheran seminary, which then was also a junior teachers college. The seminary has been moved since to River Forest where it operates now as the Concordia Teachers college.

The Elmhurst teacher has witnessed some changes at Immanuel Lutheran school. When he took over, teachers taught two grades. As an example, Bertram was in charge of the seventh and eighth grades.

The pupil enrollment in 35 years has risen from about 207 in 1929 to 277 in 1964 at Immanuel Lutheran school, and each of the eight grades has a teacher assigned to it.

Bertram performed the dual role of principal and teacher until 1952 when he asked to teach the sixth grade and music. Bertram holds a bachelor's degree from Vandercook School of Music, Chicago.

Although in semi-retirement, he still continues to teach four afternoons each week, giving instructions in music to band students.

Some students who learned their music under Bertram gave a concert last year. A similar event is planned for early next year.

When Bertram was graduated from Con-

cordia high school, St. Paul, Minn., he wanted to be a school teacher. "I have enjoyed every year of it," he said.

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BERTRAM has served as an inspiration to many of his former students who have gone on to achieve success in many walks of life ranging from the ministry to the advertising world.

"Many of my former pupils also have gone into government work, and others have taken up teaching as their lifetime occupation," Bertram said.

Three words make up Bertram's philosophy for a successful teacher—kindness, understanding and firmness.

Once Bertram distributed a questionnaire among his pupils, asking them to list what qualities they wanted to find in their teacher.

"To my surprise," he noted, "they wrote, understanding, kindness and firmness."

"I guess I haven't been wrong," he added.

Another milestone was recorded this week in Bertram's life, but this one he shared with his wife. They observed their golden wedding anniversary.

An open house was held at their home at 275 Geneva av., Elmhurst, for their friends and neighbors, teachers and former pupils.

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THE EVENT was arranged by their three children: Frederick, Crystal Lake; Paul of Inkster, Mich.; and Gertrude Bertram, at home.

The couple's romance began on a boat ride on the Mississippi river back in June, 1913. Both were attending a church convention in Quincy, where Mrs. Bertram lived. Some of the girls and boys got together for a Saturday night boat ride.

Bertram was then a teacher in Jacksonville. He visited her home from then on, al-

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