

FIFTY YEARS AND LOVING EVERY BIT OF IT

# FOND MEMORIES

The famous doctor and teacher couple, Dr Donald Bosch and wife Eloise, cherish every moment of the last five decades they have spent in Oman

POOJA SINGH

Dr Donald Bosch and his wife Eloise have often been asked why after coming to Oman 50 years ago, they never thought of going back home to America. Their answer is simple. They were always home. **TheWeek** met up with this buoyant couple at their residence on Haramel Road as they celebrate their golden jubilee of their stay in Oman. They treasure every moment spent in this warm and scenic country and want to continue to do so till their health and political situation in the US permits.

"There are only two things that

can take us away from Oman. First is our health, which at the moment is upbeat. And, the second is variation in the political situation in the US," said Dr Bosch. So strong is the feeling of belongingness to Oman that even after retiring in 1984, they decided to stay back. They now spend half of the year in the US and the rest in Muscat. "We didn't want to move to the US even after Oman didn't need us. Now, we need Oman," 87-year-old Dr Bosch added.

What about their picture of Oman before the discovery of oil opened the country's doors to incredible progress? Having spent most of their working lives as a doctor and teacher in Oman, the Bosches are uniquely placed to share their experiences. "Oman has made tremendous progress in the past years. It is a self-sufficient country now. Back then there was lack of education and health facilities. But, now Oman boasts of world-class education and medical expertise. And it continues to progress, while preserving its heritage and cultural values." When asked about their most memorable moment, they both smiled. "Every moment is so precious that we cannot chose one over the other."

Members of the Reformed Church in America, a mainline ecumenical Protestant denomination, which has a long history of providing services throughout the world, Dr and lady Bosch came to Oman in January 1955. Except for the time spent relieving medical colleagues in Iraq, Kuwait and Bahrain and occasional furloughs to America, they have lived and worked in Muscat. "The Reformed Church in America has a department designated 'World Ministries', which seeks to place



The Bosches have followed the incredible progress of the sultanate in five decades

professionals where their skills are most needed. Hence, we were ready to leave America, as Oman needed us," Eloise Bosch informed.

After graduating with a medical degree from the State University of Iowa, Dr Bosch served four years as a

**Their sense of belonging made them stay back in Oman even after retiring in 1984**

medical officer in the United States Army during World War II. Awarded the Bronze Star for action in Germany, he was discharged as a Major in 1946. Following four years of surgical residency, Dr Bosch moved with his wife Eloise and three children David, Paul and Bonnie to Oman where he worked as a surgeon at the Mission Hospital in Muttrah, and Eloise worked as a teacher at the American Mission School in Muscat.

In 1972, Dr Bosch became the first

American to be honoured with the Order of Oman by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. He was appointed the Chief Medical Officer of Khoula Hospital in 1974. In recognition of their dedicated services to Oman, both Dr and Mrs Bosch were awarded honorary doctorates degrees from Hope College in 1986. Dr Bosch received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the State University of Iowa in 1987.

In addition to memoirs of their time in Oman titled *A Doctor and A Teacher* the Bosches have published four books on seashells.