

Back where they wed



A COUPLE who met at a dance in the former Albany Barracks, Newport, returned to the Island church where they tied the knot 70 years ago.

Londoner Joseph Ireland, who was a signal instructor with the Royal Hampshire Regiment during the Second World War, met Newport-born Barbara Wright at a dance in the camp in 1941.

It was love at first sight for her as she enjoyed watching Mr Ireland, now aged 94, play guitar in the band that provided the dance music that evening.

Their whirlwind romance led to marriage at St John's Church, Newport, on June 2 that year.

Following the birth of the first of three children, Anthony, in Newport, they moved to London and then to Southampton, where they still live today.

Mr and Mrs Ireland have been frequent visitors to the Island to see relatives on 91-year-old Barbara's side of the family.

The couple, accompanied by their daughter, Penny Robini, and their eldest son, returned to St John's Church yesterday (Thursday). It was the first time they had been to the church since they married there.

They were welcomed by the church's curate, Roger Whatley.

The couple, who received a card of congrat-

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ulations from the Queen, enjoyed a family lunch in Newport afterwards.

Mr Ireland said his wife's best qualities were her diligence and culinary skills.

They have seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Their youngest son, Paul, died last year.



Joseph and Barbara Ireland, visit St John's Church, Newport, where they got married 70 years ago and, inset, on the steps of the church on their wedding day.

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