

Ann and Steve Murray



Steve was born in Halifax UK, but his family immigrated to Australia for 2 years, where he attended East Hills Boys High in southwest Sydney.

Ann's was born in Oxford UK, after her mother was evacuated during the war. They were evacuated again to her mother's hometown of Chatteris on The Fens in Cambridgeshire, They settled here; her father

became the local builder and her mother ran the Post Office.

Ann and Steve met while studying Mathematics in the same year at university in Hull, Yorkshire. Their first date was at a 1964 Valentine's Day dance. It seems they both had that X factor, as they've been together ever since. Their 1966 wedding was held in the glorious 1000+ year old oak and stone Chatteris church, where Ann had been a regular attender. It was a very traditional affair; top hat and tails and a white lace gown.

After graduation in 1967, Steve and Ann had begun their teaching careers in Maidenhead, Berkshire, when Ann noticed an advert for the back section of a big vicarage available for a pittance rent. All Steve had to do was play the church organ and act as a choirmaster. Joke!!

Steve said, *how hard can it be?*

Elementary for Steve. He had never played an organ before, let alone attended a Church of England service, being brought up Catholic, yet passed his practical interview and they moved in. It was delightful! The best moments were coming out after a midnight service and seeing the whole church gardens snug in a 2-inch blanket of snow.

However after 4, mostly rainy summer holidays, they decided to look for more sun. Queensland was chosen. Sponsored by the Queensland Government, desperate for teachers, Ann and Steve eventually became involved with the Australian mathematics teaching community. Steve created several mathematical calendars, akin to the Fire fighters Calendar I think, but more Fraction Man than Action Man.

He also produced a set of maths resources, known as the *Curriculum Resources Applications Packages* or CRAP (a number 2 best seller) and was head-hunted to set up a Computer Education Program for the Federal Government, basically from scratch. Consequently they moved to Canberra for 4 years. Ann taught at Canberra Grammar School and Steve represented Australia in France, UK and Japan at mathematics education conferences. But Canberra's climate was not for them, so they decided to take 2 years off work to build their own house – the full Monty experience!

How hard can it be? Steve said.

Elementary. They purchased a couple of acres in Tallebudgera and a *kit home*, complete with no instructions and lots of unidentified timber planks. This was not a fun time for Ann, but Steve was in his element. The result was a [wonderful](#), sprawling 5-bedroom bush retreat with a 4-car garage and workshop. For 17 years they shared many happy times there with good friends.

When they eventually returned to the workforce, the Queensland Government was employing cheap, newly minted teachers, rather than those like Ann and Steve, with one foot in the bucket and in their early 40's. So Ann and Steve did bits and bobs, the most fun being setting up the IT teaching version of *Mr. Whippy*-a Pantech van fitted with 8 Apple computers, on kindy-sized desks and chairs for 4 and 5-year-olds, who were thrilled to board their Computer Classroom van with the big rainbow on the side, keen as mustard (computers being still very novel at the time),

Then the Government funding was cut. With no spare cash for computer fun, Ann and Steve returned to teaching. In retirement they regrettably sold their beautiful home- high maintenance for creaky bones -and moved to a Sunshine Coast retirement village, where Steve's dream was to play golf and Bridge.

Yes, the first mention of Bridge! They had played some Bridge whilst at Uni, but then life got in the way. Steve was intrigued by Bridge rules and movements, so took up directing (*How hard can it be?*). Ann has always refused to learn any new bidding system, happy to bemuse everyone by playing a 60-year-old ACOL system. Steve played a lot of golf early on, as well as continuing to craft and restore timber furniture. Ann creates quilts, mostly for decorative wall hangings or charity quilts for *Sunshine Linus*. Two quilts that Steve particularly fancies are a king size bed quilt in magnificent blues and an autumnal quilt, with Canadian overtones, hanging in their lounge. It changes colour and structure as you look at.

Now they wonder *Where to next?* Who knows, but *how hard can it be?*"