

Build a beautiful relationship

Going the distance for 50 years



RELATIONSHIPS
With Joanne Wilson

A SENSE of humour and forgiveness were the main themes for a thriving and harmonious relationship based on the feedback from last week. I loved your thoughts – thank you.

We all know Valentine's Day and Marriage Week are not so much about the event but a great reminder to honour the gift of your relationship throughout the whole year. The small, consistent gestures of kindness help build a beautiful sense of safety and intimacy for the long-term.

In the same theme, I'm featuring another fabulous golden couple. Meet Lillian and Ross Anderson, who just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on August 26.

How and where did you meet and marry?

Lillian: Ross was 18 working as a bank junior. I was 17, an office assistant at a Ford vehicle sales company. We met at a weekly teenager's dance in the Lismore City Hall, NSW. Ross walked through a sea of female faces to ask me to dance. He had been "eyeing me off" for six months during his lunch hour in the local shopping square where we happened to share the same lunch time.

During our courtship, Ross was transferred with the bank to Parkes. On long weekends, he drove overnight in his British racing green Morris Mini Minor 850 to visit me. Nine months into the relationship, I left my job to be with him. Ross boarded with a family and I shared house with an elderly lady across the road.

Ross: We were married in Lismore and only then moved in together.

What were the first things that attracted you to each other?

Lillian: Ross's charm, warmth and plenty of desire to spend



► Ross and Lillian Anderson. PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

time with me. He bought me a beautiful bracelet early in our courtship.

Ross: Lillian's good looks and her smile. We both love the beach. I had a surf board and Lillian had a great bikini! She was featured on the local tourism pamphlet and I'm sure that was my first admiring glimpse of her.

Did you have children along the way?

Lillian and Ross: We have two sons who are now 47 and 43.

How did you come to live on the Sunshine Coast and what do you love about it?

Ross: We moved around the Gosford area a few times for family and work opportunities before settling in Brisbane. We visited the Sunshine Coast for holidays over many years before moving here in preparation for my retirement. We love the

friendliness of the people in the service industries, the relaxed lifestyle and incredible scenery.

What has been the most surprising thing you've learnt about each other?

Ross: Lillian is such a positive person. She has an amazing ability to handle pain. She can withstand almost anything!

Lillian: Ross learned to cook (I especially love his fabulous lamb abruzzo). He also cleans and irons.

What has been the most challenging part of being married?

Lillian: We have learnt to simply move on and forgive in troubled times by refocussing on the love that brought us together in the first place.

How do you keep the romance alive in your marriage?

Ross: We constantly go out on "dates". We enjoy many common interests as a couple and find ourselves talking and laughing together a lot.

What advice would you give newly-weds?

Lillian: Never go to sleep on an argument. Remember you are friends as well as lovers and you never want to hurt your friend.

If you could provide your secret to a thriving and harmonious marriage, what would it be?

Both: Focus on the simple pleasures in life such as walking beside the ocean or river then a picnic. You don't have to spend a lot of money to enjoy life and our beautiful surroundings here on the Sunshine Coast.

All the single ladies, all the single ladies... now put up your hands and whip out that bikini! Male suitors, be prepared to drive long distances, grab a bracelet and turn on the iron. Ross has also kindly revealed his secret lamb abruzzo recipe with me, so if you need that too, email me and I'll be sure to pass it on.

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