

park *people*

Marcelle and Ed
Butcher outside their
lovely park home

Work, music, living.



We find out more about a park home couple from Hampshire whose lives have been enriched by the sense of community and

friendships they've fostered on their site

Sitting on the terrace with Ed and Marcelle Butcher at their lovely park home on Broadway Park, in Petersfield, Hampshire, you couldn't help but relax amid the park's tranquillity and charm.

Ed and Marcelle are an entertaining couple with stories to tell galore! They've been married for 53 years, are parents of three children and have shared a close and colourful life together.

Good choice

Ed served for 30 years in the police force in and around Portsmouth. This was initiated by a girlfriend who considered his first job in tailoring to be not 'man enough!' It was a wise choice, however, as the job was never a chore. It was integral to the community with the police playing the role of social services in those days. There were occasions when safety was compromised - late night beats with exuberant drinkers, and Ed was bitten by dogs on five different occasions! He also narrowly escaped a chasing pit bull terrier that was undergoing a court decision on its dangerous pedigree.

Ed even met Marcelle when on the beat. Marcelle was only 17 and Ed just 21 at the time. They married three years later in 1964. They rented their first house and then lived in several different police digs, which provided a great community environment.

Marcelle is a trained hairdresser and worked part-time, allowing some ladies 'time together' at the beach! It was also a perfect and safe location for the children to grow up in. Their children are all grown up now, living in Cornwall, London and Horndean where their special grandson also lives.

Let the music begin

Ed and Marcelle have developed some very long-term and close friendships over the years. Many from the police force but many have also evolved from Ed's music career, which ran in parallel to his working life, and was hugely instrumental (excuse the pun!) and prominent throughout his adult years.

Ed had always been interested in music having played the violin and guitar as a youngster. But his passion was ignited when a friend gave him a reel of music to listen to

when bedridden with illness. Mesmerised by one of the then undecipherable sounds, Ed eventually established it was the sound of a pedal steel guitar. It was relatively unheard of as an instrument, so Ed was amazed that a music shop on his beat was able to obtain one. It was a top-of-the-range model; at £800 in the 1970s it needed to be! Ed paid for it in installments and the rest is history.

As it was so rare, the chances of finding a tutor for the pedal steel guitar were virtually non-existent. So, with one book from the US, and an immense amount of talent, Ed taught himself and was in immediate demand to play for various bands over the next few decades. So much so that he was asked to play with the band, Sandy Mack, four days after taking delivery of the instrument! Ed could only play a few chords at the time but he was on stage by the Saturday night.

His music was inclusive, with the family attending many of the venues. He played a mix of large and small venues but Ed favoured the smaller, more intimate, ones where he could enjoy banter and interaction with the audience.

Special place, special friends

What is quite remarkable is that two of the couple's musician friends from bands also now live on Broadway Park. In fact, Derek and Meryl Harper live next door!

Ed and Marcelle are thrilled with their park home and its location. Following the

police force, Ed worked as a senior investigations officer but, when that came to an end, he and Marcelle felt it appropriate to downsize and had considered a bungalow. Out of the blue, one of Marcelle's hairdressing customers mentioned a sister who lived at Broadway Park, which fuelled their enthusiasm to visit and subsequently secure a plot.

They bought the home directly from Tingdene and designed the interior to meet their personal preferences. It is a beautifully presented home in an enviable position.

"Ed enjoys many sports and Marcelle has been a valuable back up - particularly in making cricket teas and sandwiches!"

Peace of mind

The home is now ten years old and - already familiar with Park Home Chassis Services (PHCS) from others on the park - Ed, along with a few other residents, decided to have the underside of his home inspected to ensure the chassis and supports were all in satisfactory condition.

Ed explained, 'It was all about peace of mind. The PHCS surveyors were extremely knowledgeable and informative, and we were happy with the professional reports we received.'

Ed and Marcelle also decided to have the PHCS underfloor insulation system installed.

'We think it is a worthwhile investment and we are very pleased with the result,' Ed continued. 'PHCS is a great team. We've

been impressed by everyone.'

Ed and Marcelle are seldom apart. Ed enjoys many sports and Marcelle has been a valuable back up - particularly in making cricket teas and sandwiches! Ed has kept himself in good shape and fitness; rowing machine to pump the heart, squash and yoga for suppleness. Marcelle confirms his headstands are very impressive!

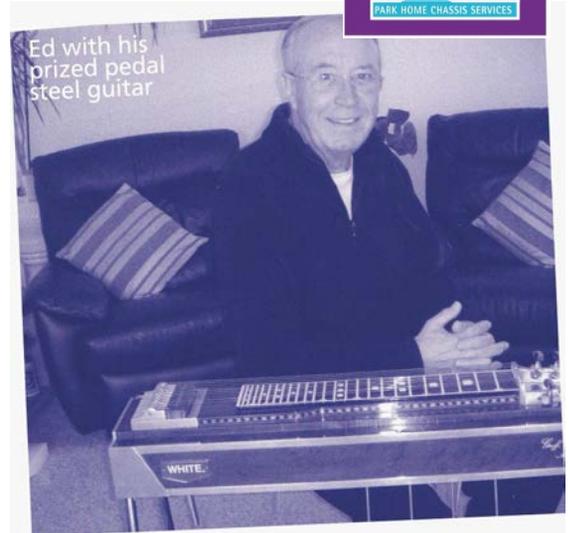
On Broadway

Life on Broadway Park is enjoyable and calm. The garden is contained and private. It's heartening to hear of such a happy community where residents group together for coffee mornings and social events. The park is close enough to walk into the fabulous historic town of Petersfield with great eateries and coffee shops.

Ed and Marcelle are still kept busy with many social engagements and friends. They are already booked up by family for the next year with house, cat and grandchildren sitting! This doesn't deter them from snatching a few peaceful weeks in their static caravan, sited near Chichester - another historic and lovely area to explore. Winter breaks with family have been spent in the New Forest and they actively book coach holidays to new and interesting places.

Delightful couple

It's delightful to meet such a positive couple. Marcelle says they are happy to 'loll about' at home but what strikes me is the wonderful balance and quality of life they seem to have achieved.



ABOVE: The Butchers bought their home direct from Tingdene and customised it too

In a nutshell

• Ed and Marcelle bought their park home because they wanted to downsize to a more manageable property and enjoy a happy retirement.

- Ed and other residents grouped together to benefit from a discounted group underfloor inspection survey by PHCS.
- The inspection and PHCS reports have given them assurance and peace of mind.
- Ed and Marcelle are pleased with the installation of the PHCS underfloor insulation - 'a worthwhile investment'.
- For further information on Park Home Chassis Services Ltd, please call 0333 456 3056 or 0118 984 3107. Alternatively, you can email info@parkhomechassis.co.uk or visit www.parkhomechassis.co.uk.