

You & Me

These men met in later life and have bonded over their desire to lend a helping hand to others.

Interview LEANNE EDMISTONE

Brian Molyneux, 80
Retired printer, Deagon

What was your career before retirement? I was in the printing industry. I started work as an apprentice compositor in 1958 and that's where I met my wife Dawn, 79. We'll celebrate our 60th wedding anniversary next year. We've got two daughters, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

How did you come to be living in Blue Care's Ibis Court retirement village? Dawn and I downsized from our large Bracken Ridge home about seven years ago and moved in here to be close to my mother, Kate, who died last year aged 106. It's also small, there are only 30 villas, very quiet, central and close to the beachfront.

What do you like about living here? It's nicely set out and the people are very nice. I'm chairman of the social committee and we organise little get-togethers. We have a newsletter, bingo, barbecues, an annual Christmas lunch and the like. One of the residents is involved with the neighbouring Uniting Church and organises bus trips occasionally. About 30 of us have just come back from a five-day tour to Warwick and Stanthorpe for the Jumpers and Jazz Festival. It was great.

How did you meet Lionel? Lionel and his wife Sue moved into the villa opposite us, so we introduced ourselves. They're probably the youngest residents in the village. We've given each other a hand around the place.

What did you two bond over? If you get down to brass tacks, it's probably just a community bond. He likes to do things for people, and so do I. We do various things for other residents and if there's any big projects going, we give each other a hand. We seem to be able to chat about anything. He's an old Sandgate guy and so am I, so there are a lot of people we both know and we reminisce about the Sandgate area.

Why is a sense of community so important? My parents were always involved in the community, and so it's in the genes. I've always been on committees, we're life members of Brighton Junior Rugby League Club, members of Probus and have volunteered at the Prince Charles Hospital twice a week for the past 15 years. Every Friday we take one of the residents, who's 93, shopping with us.

What is your philosophy for life? The motto I go by is, it's not what you can get, it's what you can give. When you're retired, every day is a holiday and it's good for your mind and body to keep active.



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COBBERS: Brian Molyneux and Lionel Baker have formed a strong bond at the Blue Care's Ibis Court retirement village. Picture: David Kelly

Lionel Baker, 69
Retired bus driver, Deagon

How did you meet your wife, Sue? A mate and I were at a school dance and saw a blonde and a brunette across the hall. We both wanted to ask the blonde to dance, so we flipped a coin. I won the toss and 51 years later, we're still together. We were both born on August 11, two years apart, but she initially thought I was using that as a line to chat her up! We've got three children and six grandchildren.

What was your career before retiring four years ago? Oh, so varied. I had 23 years with Telecom before taking a redundancy, then I drove my own cab. After being diagnosed with a kidney disease, I took a few years off to go sailing and fishing, then I drove council buses for 11 years. I finished up working as a tour bus driver, while Sue was the hostess. That was

a fantastic job, travelling the country together like the Leyland Brothers.

Why did you move into Ibis Court retirement village? We came to look at the place with my mother-in-law Dorothy Gaskell, 92, who lives here and knows a lot of the residents through church, and thought, aye, we could easily retire here too, then shut the door and take off in our caravan. We've been here about 20 months and absolutely love it. I don't think there's one person living here I don't get on with and I'm pretty hard to get on with!

Have you made a lot of friends in the village? Yes, yes, well and truly. Every person in here, I wouldn't hesitate to do something for. My mum lived in a retirement village up the coast and there was conflict; I see no conflict in here whatsoever. We have functions every now and again, with people coming from 25 of

the 30 units, and gosh, we have a lot of laughing. It is fantastic. It's the best thing I ever did.

What do you like about Brian? We're two peas in a pod when it comes to liking helping people. We do things like take the childproof tops off medicine bottles, help when their TV remote stuffs up, and mow and edge the gardens. We just hired a cherry picker and lopped a tree in the neighbouring church grounds that was causing some problems.

Why is it important to foster a sense of community? It doesn't matter whether we live in this village or the city or the state, everybody's got to have some thought for those around them. I'm not a churchgoer but I live by the values live and let live, but do unto others as you would have them do unto you. A smile and a thank you costs nothing and, by gee, you get a lot in return.