

Ken and Dea Richardson: A Whirlwind Romance



Ken and Dea Richardson on their wedding day, 5 July 1961. Photos courtesy of unknown photographer.

Ken and Dea began dating in December 1960. Their whirlwind romance continued despite distance; Ken became the official Australian Capital Territory professional tennis coach and was relocated to Canberra. His regular clientele included representatives of the various Diplomatic Corps and their families. Ken was fortunate to conduct tennis lessons with the then-Governor General and his family on the courts at Yarralumla.

The couple were engaged by March 1961, and were married at St Mark's on 5 July 1961. It was Dea's 19th birthday. Their wedding was held on a Wednesday evening and featured traditional wedding bells, a canopy and red carpet.

Thoughtfulness and faith underpins Ken and Dea's marriage, and this is exemplified through their actions.

Dea's father was too ill to attend their wedding. Understanding the significance of the day, Ken organised for Dea to be driven to her father pre-ceremony. He needed to see how beautiful she looked, explains Ken. Dea was very close with her father and she missed him dearly during the ceremony. Her uncle walked her down the aisle.

The couple highlight the significance of their wedding vows. They have renewed their vows twice since their 1961 wedding, and the first was a surprise to Dea. Ken organised for then-Rector Reverend Victor Roberts to renew their vows at St Mark's on their anniversary. The three congregated at the church on a Wednesday evening, reminiscent of their wedding. Ken and Dea privately renewed their vows again two years ago at St Mark's.

Christianity is a key aspect of Ken and Dea's lives. Dea grew up attending church and was part of the parish's choir. Ken attended church intermittently throughout his childhood, but he feels Christianity has been omnipresent in his daily life.

Ken believes that God has always cared for him and been a source of guidance. Despite experiencing difficulties from time to time, Ken explains that things generally fall into place: God is supporting him and his family.

Ken's career took the couple and their children to Melbourne in 1974. Ken was confirmed while they lived there. His confirmation was another surprise to Dea. She explains that she was deeply moved by his personal decision to be confirmed. She knew it was extremely important to him.

The couple's immense love for each other and mutual values has kept their relationship strong for over 58 years. They have experienced life's usual highs and lows, but overall, they cannot imagine live without each other and their faith, explains Dea. Ken and Dea have two children and four grandchildren: they are a close-knit family. St Mark's is homely for Ken and Dea. They have formed many friendships through the church. They attend the 8am service every Sunday. Dea is the social convenor and a welcomer at services, as is Ken when needed.

