

## personal experience



# DREAM COME TRUE

When Roseanne and Alistair Gray were first married they couldn't afford a 'mobile home'. Now more than 32 years on, they have realised that early dream and love every minute of their new way of life. Roseanne relates how it all came about

**O**ur love affair began more than 32 years ago. Not only for each other, but for park homes, too. We were just setting up home and went to the Ideal Homes Show in London, as lots of newlyweds did at that time. It was there that we saw our first 'mobile home'. We got quite excited as we talked with the salesman about different aspects of living in this type of accommodation.

Alas, it was not meant to be – he told us the price! The twin unit was £4,000 and we could get a loan for only three years – no longer, and no mortgage. As our income was only £1,800 per year we could not afford it, so we found a flat to rent and almost forgot about 'mobile homes'.

We bought a caravan for family holidays

and travelled around the country. About 10 years after we had seen our first 'mobile home' at the London exhibition we went to Weston-super-Mare. Next to the site where we stayed was a mobile home park, so we went for a walk round. The people who spoke to us were very friendly and did not mind answering our questions. One couple invited us in for a cup of tea and proudly showed us their home. That was it – our interest had been fired up all over again. After that whenever we roamed around the country we looked to see if there were any mobile home sites in the area and if there were we had a wander around, talking to the residents and asking lots of question.

But 'life goes on', as they say, and having a daughter at school and with various

#### Alistair mowing the lawn in front of the Grays' park home

hobbies and friends it never seemed the right time to 'up sticks and move'. Our daughter eventually left home and we did contemplate moving then, but as we lived only a 10-minute cycle ride from where we worked, it seemed sensible to stay where we were.

Then two years ago we realised that we really wanted to move, so we started looking in earnest. At this stage we had been buying *Park Home & Holiday Caravan* magazine for about four years so we had ideas about prices and areas. Our favourite places for holidays were North Wales and the Lake District, and as there are few parks in North Wales we started looking in Cumbria and found Nenggill Park. We had actually been there about three years before, but on this occasion there was a previously-occupied home available at a price we wanted to pay, so two months later we moved in.

Everyone living on the park and in the



**above** The couple's home has an adjacent garage

**top** A dramatic example of Roseanne's quilting

**right** One of Alistair's hobbies is making model steamboats, and these craft demonstrate how talented he is

**left** Roseanne and Alistair in their lounge, with some examples of Roseanne's handiwork on the wall behind



village are very friendly. It's like living in a village within a village. Our quality of life is so much better and we are very happy.

I have a garden for the first time and I love working out there. I am learning to use a computer and with my patchwork and quilting, and taking a few photographs, the days are flying by.

My husband Alistair spends his time

taking and developing his photographs and making model steamboats. He has joined two clubs here and helps me in the garden as well as keeping up the maintenance of our home. He also enjoys fly fishing but rarely seems to find the time to go!

Over the years we have read all the letters about rogue park owners and the troubles people have had. If we had taken it all on

board we would never have bought a park home. There are lots of truly nice people living in park homes and working in the park homes industry.

This is a very nice, quiet and pleasant way to live, so get out there, meet the people, ask your questions and at the end of the day trust your instincts. If it feels right, go for it. We are so glad we did. 