

## Lucy and Dan Smithers

Lucy went to St. Hilda's College, Oxford, where she met her future husband. So did her mother, her grandmother and her aunt. Dan worked in software engineering in ships and submarines. His father and grandfather both worked as Naval Constructors (civilian designers of Royal Navy ships and submarines). Clearly, both Lucy and Dan follow strong family traditions.



Lucy was born in Sheffield, but spent most of her childhood up to the age of 13 in West Yorkshire. She has a brother who is two years younger than her. When she was 13, her family moved to

Hertfordshire and Lucy attended Dame Alice Owen School before going up to Oxford to study Biochemistry.

Lucy was initially interested in studying how the shapes of molecules make them work in biology, but became fascinated with genetics and developmental biology and this was the subject of her PhD, which was funded by the Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

Lucy met Dan when she was in her first year, and he was in his second year. After Dan graduated, and when Lucy was studying for her PhD, they

moved to Worcester, and then Evesham, as Dan's first job was at the Defence Research Agency in Malvern.

Lucy and Dan then moved to the outskirts of London to be nearer to their respective job



Attempting to create Robert Doisneau's  
*Wedding Ribbon* on their Wedding Day July 1994

markets, settling on Stoneleigh as Dan had a job at ERA Technology in Leatherhead. In London, Lucy worked first at the Institute of Cancer Research in Chelsea, then she got another two post-doctorate positions – firstly a research project on stem cells at UCL, and then a project on cranial facial development in the Medical

Dental School at Guys.

By this time, Lucy and Dan had three boys, Nathaniel, Jonathan and Matthew. Lucy felt that she was not progressing enough in her chosen field, and so she moved into medical writing, which provides far more job security and just as much job fulfilment as research.

Dan was born in Singapore, the younger brother of two older sisters. His father worked for the Admiralty in the Ministry of Defence on RN ships as a Constructor and he had been posted to Singapore in 1967 as part of the transfer of the dockyard from British colonial rule to the new Singapore Government when it became independent in 1970. However, the family moved back to the UK in the July of that year on the cruise ship the Achille Lauro, which was later famous for being the target of a hijack in the Mediterranean in 1985.

The family settled in Bath for seven years, then went to Chatham for three years, before moving back to Bath, where Dan attended King Edward's School. Growing up, Dan was a keen Scout and, aged 17, attended an International Scout Jamboree in Norwich. Walking back from the pub, a local encampment took exception to him and friends singing, and rammed a car into the group, hitting four of them. Dan broke his femur and had severe head injuries which rendered him unconscious and in hospital for several weeks.

With determination and support from school and family, he recovered enough to gain a place at Oxford University. After a gap year working for the MOD at Aldermaston and finding out about various engineering techniques, Dan went up to St. Peter's College, Oxford, still sponsored by the MOD, to study Engineering Science, but he changed course and studied Engineering and Computer Science. He has since worked as a

software engineer for various companies, the latest of which were Sperry Marine where he was writing software for Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, and British Aerospace in Rochester working on Dreadnought class submarines. His present company is based in Chester.

Lucy and Dan were both brought up going to Church. Lucy's father sings in his Church choir, and Lucy joined too when she was around seven. Lucy's father has been Churchwarden in his Church for the past 20 years. Dan's family also went to Church. When Lucy and Dan moved to Stoneleigh in 1997, they tried out various Churches, but were impressed by the atmosphere and welcome at St. Mary's. All three boys have been baptised there, Dan plays in the Church band, and Dan and Lucy sing in the choir.

Lucy started editing the monthly St. Mary's magazine 'The Window' just before she became a

medical writer, and continued in this position for several years.

Dan has been Churchwarden since 2016, and has been on the PCC for a number of years. In addition to this, Lucy has run the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ewell Cub Pack for the past 5 years, and Dan is a keen Morris Dancer.



Dan, the lone Morris dancer on St. George's Day 2020 (during lockdown)

Morris Dancer.

Lucy and Dan started coming to St. Mary's as a young couple, and their boys have grown up through the Church.

As a family, they are always willing to participate in Church activities and provide a refreshing stance on many issues.



Scouts observing St. George's Day 2020 (during lockdown)

As part of a congregation where they don't fit into the age profile they, and their boys, are valued for their enthusiasm and commitment, and for their encouragement of a youth ministry.