

Valentine's a day for love

Weddings, renewal of vows and gifts galore

LOVE is in the air this Valentine's Day, even for reluctant romantic Ben Cavin.

Mr Cavin, 26, will marry his partner Jodi O'Connor, 24, tomorrow, four days after their three-year anniversary.

Ms O'Connor joked her husband-to-be did not believe in occasions like birthdays and Valentine's Day.

But timing meant February 14 was destined to be a special day for the couple.

"We wanted to get married around our anniversary. It just happened to be Valentine's Day," Ms O'Connor said.

The couple, who both work for the Royal Australian Navy, will be married at The Hilton Blue Horizon Chapel.

Their 16-month old son will carry their wedding rings.

"We're both really excited," Mr Cavin said.

Florists were yesterday bracing for a hectic weekend.

Wild About Flowers owner Claire Hughes said there was a steady flow of orders

Stephanie Harrington

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over the weekend, with office deliveries keeping florists busy on Friday.

Red roses and pink oriental lilies were big sellers, along with chocolates, toys and sparkling wine.

Women were also buying flowers for their beaus.

"We have a lot of customers who are gentlemen who love flowers," Ms Hughes said.

Evert Opals and Fine Jewellery owner Mary Mohun said casual, costume jewellery including heart-shaped pendants were top-sellers.

Cairns Central retailers expected brisk business over the weekend.

Marketing manager Suzy Walker said "pamper packs", roses, facials, fragrances, diamonds and lingerie were suggested gifts for women.

Recommended gifts for men included watches, massages, shirts, cologne, game consoles and DVDs, she said.



Love is eternal: Alan and Judith Crockford who will renew their wedding vows at Palm Cove tomorrow.

Picture: TALIA LING

'I do' 50 years on

A COUPLE celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary after meeting as immigrants on a ship bound for Australia have won Tourism Palm Cove's Taste of Romance competition.

Alan and Judith Crockford will renew their wedding vows tomorrow on Valentine's Day at the Angsana Great Barrier Reef Chapel on the Palm Cove beachfront.

The Crockfords's story about Alan supporting Judith through two battles with cancer touched the judges so much that the Sebel Reef House and Spa offered the couple a night's accommodation in a spa suite and dinner at the hotel's restaurant in addition to their ceremony.

Mr and Mrs Crockford, who celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on February 20, met on board the *Fairsea* in 1957 as young English immigrants bound for Australia.

"We left the ship at Melbourne and he caught

another to Sydney and must have missed us because he gradually made his way to Melbourne and before long we were inseparable," Mrs Crockford said.

The couple married and had two children, living an Aussie lifestyle before career opportunities led them to Vancouver for 20 years.

After Mrs Crockford was diagnosed with ovarian cancer they decided to retire early and in 2001 moved to Cairns where their daughter Susan Crockford lived.

Back in Australia Judith faced yet another battle, this time with colon cancer, which she said brought her and Alan even closer.

As the couple prepares to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary, Mrs Crockford is enjoying a happy, healthy lifestyle in the tropics and looking forward to saying "I do" yet again to the cheeky English lad who won her heart half a century ago.

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