



# TOURISM

by Bill Nehmy

*I am pleased to introduce Trudy and Steve Dickson from Ambleside Distillers, one of Hahndorf's recent success stories.*

**BN:** Welcome Trudy and Steve, please can we start with an overview of your early years, where you were born, went to school, your early plans and aspirations?

**TD & SD:** (Trudy) I'm such a proud born and bred South Aussie and I grew up in the beachside suburbs around Sealcliff.

My dad is a surf life saving legend (Henley) so we spent a lot of time around the coast. I moved to the Hills in 1983 and we have lived in Hahndorf for about 20 years.

Our son Matt was born at the Mount Barker Hospital – which is also where Steve and I met when we worked there together! I jumped into my career early – I couldn't wait to get into the work scene but I soon hit the glass ceiling, so went back to study and then moved into HR.

I was working in that industry when the GFC hit and was made redundant overnight. I decided to take the leap and open my own firm so I went from employee to employer overnight.

We still have that business in Adelaide and I love it because I've been in that industry for so long now and I work with so many great clients.

Steve was born in the UK in a small town in York. His family migrated from the UK when he was only 2 years old. They embraced Australia immediately (although his mum still barracks for England in the cricket!) and soon became citizens.

Steve grew up in the northern suburbs and has fond memories of so many good times like the Jimmy Barnes concert at the Elizabeth Rugby Club.

His family moved to the Eyre Peninsula (EP) after he finished school and he took up a traineeship with SA Health and ended up working all over the EP relieving CEOs when they went on holidays.

He spent 30 years in the health sector and eventually made the difficult decision to leave paid employment to make Gin full time. Not a hard decision really!



*Steve, Matt and Trudy Dickson*

**BN:** Please can you elaborate on Ambleside Distillers, a 1 minute walk from your house!

**TD & SD:** Our property in Hahndorf is affectionately known as the 'Old Sawmill Block' on the corner of Ambleside Road and the main road in Hahndorf. Our distillery story started when Matt was working in London in the middle of the Gin revival and a local distillery came in and did a tasting.

He fell in love with Gin and when Steve and I went on a holiday to the UK, Matt suggested we visit the distillery and check it out.

He knew the idea of building a distillery in the back yard of our Hahndorf property would be too good to resist and when Steve and I walked into the London shed that housed all that gorgeous copper equipment, he was right!

We love our property and its surrounding paddocks. So even though we are on the main road, it's really relaxing sitting out on the Tasting Bar deck at the distillery with a G&T in hand. Hey, we have a pretty amazing work/life.

From the beginning of the idea of owning a distillery, it was always our dream to build a venue for visitors to come and meet our family of distillers and sit and enjoy our gins and food plates highlighting amazing local produce and taking in the view.

**BN:** If you have visiting friends or relatives and you want to give them a memorable Adelaide Hills day, what do you recommend?

**TD & SD:** We don't have to go far to spoil people with so much on offer in the Hills. Everyone loves a wander

down the main street of Hahndorf and there are so many new shops popping up all the time. The Lane, The Crafers and The Uraidla are a couple of our fave lunch spots.

Way too many wineries to mention but a visit to ArtWine in Woodside that takes in the beautiful hills views is really worth a visit. We're looking forward to a tour of the Jurlique gardens in Hahndorf once spring has kicked off the flowering season. Of course we finish with a cocktail or three at the distillery!

**BN:** What advice would you give a young person in respect to finding the right career and to have an enriching life?

**TD & SD:** Sounds a bit cliché but I flip the saying 'do what you love,' to 'love what you do.'

Most of us have to work for a lot of years, so why not enjoy it! Turn up every day and give your best and you will be recognised and rewarded. And if you're not, it's time to move on.

We are always learning and whether you start with qualifications or learn along the way, never stop. No career choice has to be a forever choice, so don't be afraid to take calculated risks.

Being brave and putting yourself out there can be tough, but the alternative can be even harder.

*Thanks Trudy & Steve for giving us the opportunity to get to know you and Ambleside Distillers better. Having your son Matt now involved full time in the business makes it a wider 'family affair'. I love sitting outside looking at the beautiful nature outside Ambleside, you are in another world, hardly believable you are at the start of the main street of Hahndorf!*