

So You Want to be a Landlord?

Forward

I never planned on being a landlord. Blame it on love.

When I first met my husband he was already heavily invested in real estate. I didn't give it much thought until after we were married. In this **after** part I began to realize just how much time rentals took. This was... after my husband fielded the late night phone calls for plumbing emergencies... after the Saturdays spent cleaning out rentals.... after seeing my husband slaving over a tumbling pile of bills at night.

I realized that if we were to ever have any quality time together (time doing something more uplifting than cleaning out calcified toilet bowls) that I'd better shoulder a bit of the load.

We both had full time jobs. My husband was a school principal. I was a high school English teacher. We had a his/mine/and ours family of 8 children. We lived in a 140-year-old farmhouse. We ran a swim school during the summer. We planted Christmas trees on our property and sold them during Christmas break. We had busy lives. I knew nothing about being a landlord. But I could learn.

Motivated by the image of time with my honey, I plunged into the nitty gritty of being a landlord. I took phone calls, interviewed prospective tenants, painted walls, hauled away trash. I hired plumbers, wrote checks, deposited rents. I made mistakes. Lots of mistakes. I tried to find the balance between caring about people and running a business.

My husband and I bought more rental property. I retired from teaching and took on even more of the rental business. Before I knew it...I was a landlord. Twenty-five years later, I'm still at it.

Everyone takes a different path to becoming a landlord. This was mine.

I hope your time as a landlord is a interesting a ride as mine has been.

Pat Hartmann