**Oral History Transcription – Kerry – Chipstead Lake**

**Rewind – Leonard Cheshire Disability, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund**

**Filmed** – 2016

**Start of transcription**

[Text on screen: What is your background?]

[Kerry]

00:00:10 - When I left school, I went to college. I was studying to look after children. I had a part-time job behind a bar. I was a glass collector. Worked with my family. I don't know. As the years went on at college, someone said to me they were working here and I thought, "Well, I don't know if I want to work with children now," so she said, "Well, come along, let's get you an application for when they want staff."

00:00:38 - So, when I come for an interview, left college, and started here. And that was nearly 18 years ago.

[Text on screen: What is the volunteer team like?]

00:00:48 - Daphne Shipman, she's been a very big part of this organisation, I think, from day one, actually. I'm sure she probably oversaw the home being built. So, she's got a lot of memories, but she's an interesting lady. So, yes, and obviously still part of my day centre now. She'll do whatever she can for people. She's got a heart of gold.

00:01:14 - Sheila, she was lovely. She was really good for the service users. Would fix their clothes and put in sew-in name tags and go and read to people if they weren't very well and she used to go down to the lounge, that used to be on a Thursday, she used to make me laugh because she'd get a congregation of service users and she'd read the paper. By the time she got to the end of the paper, I think half of them had fallen asleep, bless, but she carried on regardless. I think she's possibly one of the people from the beginning, volunteers.

00:01:47 - We have Hans and Marion. They live in the village. A remarkable couple. Marion will hold a pottery session on a Thursday. She's very good, very kind. And her husband, he would come and play the piano and he's been very good at Christmas times when we've had some carol services and that. He's been there tinkling the ivories for us.

[Text on screen: What are your memories of when you first arrived at Chipstead Lake?]

00:02:13 - A bit daunting at first. I think I wanted to wrap everyone up in cotton wool. When you first, yeah, this a first job, yeah, you feel sorry for people. They don't want your pity. You learn that pretty quick and they are no different to you or I.

00:02:31 - Just because someone's in a wheelchair, they are human, they have feelings, you know, they have a mind. Just because somebody might not be able to communicate, they can be a very intelligent person. Learned that very quickly. Lot of strong characters. They're part of your family. They're your life and they are. Everyone. They're a big part of my life.

[Text on screen: What are your happiest memories of working here?]

00:02:58 - There's been lots. There's been lots. I've seen myself develop over the years. I want to manage my own home one day. I'm actually qualified to manage my own home, but that's what I want. I want to run a home to the standard which Pia did. Pia, I've learned a lot from her and that was a remarkable lady. A remarkable service manager. And yeah, I want to with people with disabilities as well.

00:03:27 - So, one of my happiest was actually getting my management qualification, so I can actually go on and do it.

00:03:32 - But just to see people, you see people come in, say, from being admitted from hospital, to come here to see people thrive, to see people develop and just enjoy life.

00:03:45 - That just because they're in a wheelchair, if it was an illness that's come on quite suddenly, yeah, I don't know how I'd be, but to be able to improve people's lives and make a difference, that's the good times, which is mostly every day.

00:04:04 - I enjoy coming to work every day. It is my life. It is. I can't see myself leaving here. I can see myself staying here until I retire. You never know, but it will always be part, even if I did leave, I would still be here. I would still be coming here to visit, most certainly. It's taught me a lot. Yeah, makes me appreciate life. Most certainly.

**End of transcription**