**Oral History Transcription - Paul – St Cecilia’s**

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

**Filmed - 2016**

**Start of Transcription**

[Text on screen: What is your background?]

[Paul]

00:00:10 - Yeah, mainly been doing driver... School, uni, went to uni, didn't pass uni, then did a few driving jobs. I was a Tesco delivery driver, I was a bus driver, did driving for Bromley Council, driving those white things for the learning disabled and the elderly, taking them to the day centres and stuff. I did that for a year. And then I saw St Cecilia's advertising for a driver in my local 'News Shopper'. And I went for the job and got it. And that was seven years ago last month.

[Text on screen: What is involved in your job at St Cecilia’s?]

00:00:45 - Yeah, I'm the paid driver. So I'm in charge of all the home's driving needs, whereby taking residents to a lot of hospital appointments, we've got 30 residents here, and obviously all of them have very... complex transportation needs, and you're not gonna get them on public transport very easily, so we have, at the moment, two converted vans with ramps at the back which we use. And, yeah, so, for all hospital appointments but then lots of other social trips and any other driving needs the home needs. Which can also can combine... You know, if there's any other duties, which means basically anything that they need, I'll help my, a hand at doing, really.

[Text on screen: Do you have any special memories of working at St Cecilia’s?]

00:01:26 - Gone to Twickenham for a rugby match before, a couple of rugby matches, which have always been good. Saw England... I think it was even Australia, when we beat them once. It was one of the Autumn Internationals. And we did... There was a Six Nations game we went to as well. Well, we've managed to get free tickets, because of the charity and everything, they give away a certain number of disabled tickets to each game free, and a couple of times, we were lucky enough to get a ticket for a resident and a carer. And then they've gone, "Oh, it's a Sunday. "We've gotta take a resident to the rugby." It's like, "I'll do it." (Laughs)

00:01:56 - I've taken a few day trips down to the seaside. I've done that, and I've, um... There are a couple of residents who I've taken, for instance, on weeks where they've gone to a different home... a different Leonard Cheshire home, so I've driven them to there and picked them up again. One of them, years ago, went up to as far... I can't remember... It was a long way and I remember we had the two minibuses, 'cause we did an exchange whereby one resident from our home went to change places with another resident. And we ended up... I ended up meeting their driver in a service station car park, on the M1 somewhere. I think it was up to... Was it Leeds? Or even... It might've been further north than that. I can't quite remember. It was a couple of hours' drive that I did. Met in a service station car park, changed over residents and came back again.

[Text on screen: What are your memories of residents at St Cecilia’s?]

00:02:43 - You get personal relationships with most of them, to be honest with you. I remember one man called Brian who didn't... Couldn't see very well, couldn't hear very well but he used to love betting. So whenever I had a spare afternoon, I just went over to him, "You want to go down the betting shop, Brian?" "Yeah, let's go." So I'd take him down Bromley, just the local betting shop, so he couldn't see very well, he couldn't hear, so I just... "What trap this one?" "Oh, I'll be on trap 2." So just put 50p each way bet each race on trap 2 until you ran out of your 5 pounds or made enough money and wanted to come back again. (Man chuckling) - And things like that, or... There was one, he was only in here for six months, but I remember the day that he... I had to... He had an appointment back here. He fell down the stairs and did a spinal injury. And he got wheeled... the clinic he was in, he went out of there in a wheelchair. So I remember the day that he was able to walk — not long, but he was able to walk back in through the doors and see the nurses on his old ward, walking back in. And that was a great day, 'cause it wasn't... It wasn't... It was the look on the nurse's face when they saw him walking in that made it for me. [Man: I can imagine]. — He was a good guy. I managed to actually meet him up in a pub after... (Man laughing) - He's a QPR fan, I'm a Charlton fan, and we actually played each other. And we went for a beer after the game. After he'd left here, as well, so... And I told him the other day, that was really good.

[Text on screen: How do you feel about your time at St Cecilia’s?]

00:03:59 - I tell you, it's the first place I've worked at where it's not a struggle to get out of bed in the morning. (Man laughs) - It's not that, "Oh, god. Work. Dark. "Five minutes, five minutes, five minutes" on the alarm. That hasn't happened for seven years. It's... It's the residents. It's the helping someone, I think. It's huge satisfaction. It really is. And it's so varied, my work, as well. So yes, I'm a driver, but every day is something different. Whether it is just taking someone to Bromley for shopping, or it's going... up to Leeds or whatever, it's so varied, and... But it... You always are reminded how... necessary it is, as well, and how just going down to Bromley is nothing - well, for me and you, it doesn't seem like a lot, but when you're in a chair and you can't get out, it can be a lot more than that. I've enjoyed...enjoyed it immensely, really. So I think it's... the most rewarding job I've had. And for me, I enjoy it the most of any job I've had. It's more than a job. It really is.

**End of transcription**