**Film Transcription**

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

**Film Title:** Valid Persons - 1981

**Duration:** 40 minutes 10 seconds

**Transcription Date:** September 2017

Please note: This document does not contain the transcript of the actual Audio Description for this film.

**Start of transcription**

00:00:08 - (cheerful piano music)

00:00:42 - (music continues)

00:00:58 - (music tempo increases)

00:01:12 - WOMAN: I think the freedom to be able to do as you please, to be able to, you know, read, or, as I do, paint, and to be able to do it is fabulous. I think perhaps we need more, um, help to be able to do these things because of our disabilities.

00:01:34 - WOMAN 2: I think the main thing is that one can't actually impose an activity on another human being, especially when they come here as disabled as they are. But, by showing them a wide range of activities, that they may finally find one which they think they will enjoy.

00:01:51 - WOMAN 3: I've discovered new skills. I used to be a secretary. Now I paint by mouth, I write poetry and play music.

00:02:08 - MAN: Although most of us have many disabilities, we also have abilities, and they're well catered for here.

00:02:19 - (jaunty music)

00:02:39 - WOMAN: Well, you know, Seven Springs and any Cheshire Home relies very much upon its voluntary workers to bring in the little extra something.

00:02:55 - MAN: I think, without the voluntary workers we would feel more isolated, and they also bring in something of the outside world. They bring in a little extra to the building, which we are very much aware of. They are additional faces, friends.

00:03:13 - WOMAN: What does one do, after spending all your life, and you come to retiring age, what do you do? I was at a loss - no family, after a busy industrial life, what I was going to do. And I've had 20 happy years with a family. This family here, at Dolywern. They have given me far more than ever I have been able to give to them. How much they have given me in love, in taking me in to their family. They're all different, they're all of various temperaments.

00:04:05 - MAN: I think our home is so relaxed that this helps an enormous amount in communication at all levels. And Christian names are the norm, rather than surnames, which of course means more, again, of a family situation. And this again removes any question of formality, it also removes the idea of an institution, tears all that down, and you're left in the end with a very personal relationship.

00:04:36 - MAN: I come in my invalid car, as I've had an invalid car for 20 years, and I've been coming about seven years. The time before I came to the Cheshire Home, after I lost my wife, I was a very, very lonely and withdrawn person. The management at the Mickley Hall asked me if I'd come and help them the best way I could. And I've come ever since. It's very, very rewarding, as it serves two purposes. It helps me, it gives me the, uh... the encouragement to help disabled people, and I find it very satisfactory.

00:05:26 - WOMAN: The day care is a marvellous opportunity, I think, for disabled people who live in the area, outside of the home. If they need the care that the home can offer them, it's a marvellous opportunity for them to go into the home and see what can be done and the wonderful facilities which are available in Douglas House.

00:05:47 - MAN: We are fortunate in having a day centre, wherein people come from outside and they all participate in everything here and they are able and they can participate in whatever is available here.

00:06:21 - MAN: Transport is vital. The problem - the main problem that most of our residents have, is one of mobility and the home's transport system is their passport to the outside world. It's a very, very vital cog. More important, I think, even than drawing people into the home are getting our own people out and into the community and around about to everything.

00:06:47 - MAN: I would like the opportunity of being able to go anywhere that any other able-bodied person can. I'm quite aware of the things that I can't do. I'm not asking for the impossible. I don't want to be the first paraplegic up Everest. I think it's very important for us to get out, you know, go to pubs, go to nightclubs, anything like that - show that we're just exactly the same as everybody else and we like to go out, you know, we like to have a good time and we can have a laugh at other people, and at ourselves, 'cause we do laugh at ourselves quite a lot, actually.

00:07:15 - MAN: The amount of humour is really something. It's one of those things that you wouldn't expect in a group of people that are disabled.

00:07:26 - WOMAN: Most of us have a good sense of humour, which I think is essential. And you meet a lot of very humorous people and especially some of the staff are very, very humorous and cheer you up no end.

00:07:52 - WOMAN: I think part of the atmosphere in the home is that we keep the nursing staff to an absolute minimum. The staff employed to give care to the residents are light-hearted, scatty young people.

00:08:07 - MAN: But I think that far more important is the fact that we should all have interests of our own.

00:08:16 - (water patters) [discussion between a resident and a volunteer]

00:08:58 MAN: I had very bad pressure sores when I first came in here and the flotation cushion which I use now - this is an American cushion - and it distributes one's weight so well that in fact it's almost impossible to get a pressure sore with it. Since I've been using this cushion, I'm 18 months now free of pressure sores, I can stay up for a full day, getting up at 8 o'clock in the morning and staying up until as late as I like at night.

00:09:32 - (ping-pong ball clattering)

00:09:38 [two people playing table tennis]: Shot, Don. 9-10. 10-10s. - Oh! - Oh, I like. - You're the only one that... - This way a bit, though.

00:10:08 - WOMAN: Well, sometimes, when the residents come, they've rather lost the zest to live and they just more or less give up and don't use the abilities that they still have. Yes, I agree that at times it is difficult to sustain morale and to try to combat the apathy.

00:10:35 - WOMAN: Gradually, if you sit and you do nothing, the pathways to the brain do get forgotten, you know - you forget how to do things. You know, it does need a lot of encouragement to show them that they can do it themselves and probably most of my work could be done by somebody who wasn't necessarily a physiotherapist, in lots of ways.

00:10:54 - WOMAN: Medical care to a certain extent, but it's more caring than medical care.

00:10:59 - Physiotherapist: That's it. Let them relax and swing them backwards and forwards.

- That's lovely.

- Gently, Ivy.

- Now, Ron - we've got the ladies working. We'll set off here. Try and stretch up a bit. Well done. Right. Do you want to turn round? Are you getting tired? Come on, then. You have to shuffle back. OK. Ooh, dear - you've had a good walk this morning. OK?

- Is your shoulder hurting a bit?

- No, no.

- Sometimes. Alright. Well, stay down there. We'll call that a day.

00:11:42 – Speech Therapist: OK, Wendy, now, let's have it again - what were you saying? I was trying... I have been trying...

00:11:53 – WENDY: I...have been trying...

- Mm-hm.

- I have been trying...

- Yes, I've got that - "I have been trying." Remember not to repeat. Yes, carry on.

-WENDY: (Indistinct)

– Speech Therapist: To do the breathing?

- You know and... can help me.

- Mm-hm.

- WENDY: (Indistinct)

- Yes. About your ribs, bit restrictive.

- I know my... breathing that way... And then my...

- It didn't work? Or it did?

- No. It did work.

- It did work? Oh, good! Splendid. Oh, I'm glad you've put that into practice. Well done. Any words giving you problems at the moment? Apart from everything! Anything specific?

- Um... (Indisctinct)

- But what did I tell you about the cassette? I told you not to use it, didn't I?

- WENDY: (Laughs) Yes, ma'am!

00:13:39 - (gentle piano music)

00:14:28 – WOMAN: And what Sister and I try to do is recreate the sort of home they would have had had they stayed out in the community.

00:14:37 - (piano music continues)

00:14:47 – MAN: Calling Stinkeroo! How's my little budgie this morning? Let's put the kettle on and the tape on for your mum. If Ann and I want to do anything separately, the beauty of having two rooms is that we can. We don't have to live in each other's company the whole time.

00:15:09 - WOMAN: I did a lot of wheelchair dancing and I got the British title and Michael came along and asked me to marry him.

00:15:18 - MICHAEL: And fortunately she said yes, when she'd slowed down. At last I have a... Hello, darling!

00:15:27 – WOMAN: Hello, Michael. What would you like this morning?

- MICHAEL: Well, I'd like a cup of coffee. But first and foremost, I'd like my good morning kiss.

00:15:33 MAN: The whole business of feeling wanted by somebody - I mean, we all need other people to help us in different ways. To know that somebody actually needs you makes you feel fantastic.

00:15:46 – MAN 2: What you've got to remove in fact is a barrier. Not put something there but take something away. There's a barrier between ability and disability and able-bodied people think that disabled people, that they instinctively think that they're poles apart. If we can remove those barriers and get... have the same level of conversation and understanding between able-bodied and disabled as obtains between two of the equivalent type, then we will have achieved something.

00:16:25 - (indistinct conversation)

00:16:29 - (shovels scraping)

00:16:43 - (indistinct conversation)

00:16:52 - WOMAN: But, if you want to get on, if you want to do things, you've got to push that much harder and I think disabled people tend to do that. We tend to get much more out of life and much more enjoyment out of, maybe, simple things, ordinary, everyday things but I've found, with all of my friends here, that we all seem to do lots more than my friends who are able-bodied.

00:17:16 - WOMAN: We know they want medication and medical treatment and they know it but, um... we play that down in as much as we get that out of the way and then get on with living.

00:17:26 - MAN: I was at university, just finished a degree and I applied for 28 jobs and the response from Littlewoods was very quick and I thought, 'Right, grab it,' and I had nowhere to live and I phoned here. They said, "Yes, you can come up for a month's trial," so I came up into the main building and stayed there for a month and when they found out after a month that they were hardly seeing me or doing anything for me, they decided that they'd send me across here and give me a trial across here. And, from then on, I just went to work. And had holidays and did things like everybody else does.

00:20:10 - MAN: Somehow or other, we've got to get over to people that these are ordinary people like ourselves. The problem really is that, very often, the first thing a person sees is a wheelchair - they don't see the person.

00:20:27 - WOMAN: The work I do for the hospital is the casualty records, the casualty book. In the beginning, I started here four days, but now they've got more volunteer workers and we do about a day each.

00:20:43 - MAN: I do everything in the office. The invoicing of local authorities, the invoicing of people who have to pay contributions towards their own fees and any other job that comes my way. I provide a very useful liaison between residents and staff, and in that way, I think the whole exercise has worked very well. It's certainly worked very well as far as I'm concerned. And that came as a surprise. I'd always thought that I would only be regarded simply as sort of an object in the future. I didn't realise I could still be regarded as a person.

00:21:19 – [Background conversation]

- OK. Right. Uh, Jenny Handlin?

- Yeah.

- Well, 20. Oh, sorry - no, that's wrong.

- Can I just... 20...

- Yeah, 12 domestic and...

- Yeah, 12 of 8, actually.

- OK?

- Yep, that's fine.

- Quinley Parish, 25.

- Yeah.

- Doris Widdecombe, 25.

- That's 20 and 5.

- 20 and 5, yeah. Phyllis Drummond...

00:21:46 - WOMAN: The staff themselves are very important and if they're involved and their thoughts and wishes are discussed, then we can work together far more effectively and they feel part of the home.

00:22:01 - (indistinct conversation)

00:22:04 – [Staff conversation]

- It went off this morning - I saw that it went and I've just had a phone call to say that she's ready to come back, so I hope that the letter will have carried some weight in that...

00:22:13 - WOMAN: We are constantly talking around the theme of the fact that it is the residents' home and we have 27 homes here in one. Since I've been Head of Home, I have found tremendous support from our overall management committee. At the end of the day, the vital thing about all of this is that, without the management committee, we would not have a Cheshire home.

00:22:45 – MAN: You alright, Les? Do you mind if we come in and do a bit of measuring up?

00:22:50 - (indistinct conversation)

00:22:56 - MAN: This section we're in now, we're converting ourselves by direct labour. The people who will come here in general will be the emergency care which we have cared for in the past, where they have lost the help of perhaps a husband or wife to look after the disabled person normally living in their own home. This level here will be for the disabled persons and the floor above will be for the ambulant friends or relatives. Now we will be able to cater in this unit for six persons at a time and if there is a gap in time, we also take of course holiday care, for which we also intend to develop another wing later on.

00:23:38 - (gentle music)

00:23:51

- That's alright. Thank you.

- Put it down in the top corner.

- Well, how about that, Jan?

- Look at that. They're just about finished there.

- Right plan too. Right paper?

- Yes.

- Do you like it?

- Your Stewart tartan - that's just right, isn't it?

- Well, Jan, that was your choice.

- Thank you.

- You've got your tartan paper.

- Thank you, thank you.

- And you've also got it in the clan.

00:24:21 - WOMAN: I think it's the flexibility of the Leonard Cheshire Foundation that makes it such a success and a pioneer in other things.

00:24:33 - WOMAN: Residents are involved in, as much as possible, the running of the home. You get their views on what they think should happen.

00:24:44 - MAN: I think management, of course, are here solely because the residents are here. There's no other reason for the management to be here.

00:24:53 - WOMAN: We elect residents to stand for us on the management committee and also we have our Wednesday meetings when staff and residents come together and discuss any matters that may have arisen or any outings, anything coming up in the near future.

00:25:19 - MAN: The thing that I think is one of the most difficult things living in a community like this is to decide for yourself how much of yourself you give to the community and how much you actually try and lead your own individual, separate life.

00:25:36

- WOMAN: May I come in?

- Yes, sure, come in.

- Wait a minute - I'll turn this off.

- I've just got a hold of these photographs Of one of the homes or... maybe more than one of the homes in one of the Third World countries.

- Oh, they are interesting.

- That could well be Barbados or somewhere in the Caribbean.

- So far, we've about 25 pounds in the funds for Bangladesh. And there's the raffle to come on the Red Arrows night.

- Yeah - now, that's the 28th of February, isn't it?

- That's lovely, though, Dorothy. I'm glad about those photographs.

- That will really bring the point home, won't it?

- Yes.

- Well, um, residents' meeting next Wednesday.

- Yes.

- Oh, it's my turn to take it.

- Yes. OK, then.

- Thanks a lot.

- Right. Cheerio.

- Bye-bye.

00:27:25 – WOMAN: I met my husband about four years ago. We got engaged and then, since then, we have now been married and got our own flat, which we've found is very nice. We get on very well together. We're in this sort of system, which is very nice.

00:27:40 - MAN: Me and my wife, we share our jobs 50-50, so we have a little bit of arguments but they're bound to overlap. We get on alright together and as I say, it's a good thing and I'd like to see other Cheshire homes, and probably this one, trying to improve, trying to get more flats or bedsitters for residents, so they can be a little bit more independent. That's what I hope.

00:28:10

- Oh, that's super, isn't it?

- Mmm.

- I'm going out tomorrow, have a whole tea out now.

- Ah, lovely. Yeah.

00:28:20 - WOMAN: The whole idea of the Cheshire homes, I feel, is the word 'home' itself and what it implies. This is the very feeling that the Group Captain is always putting over.

00:28:32 - (lively harmonica melody)

00:29:26

- Morning, Mary.

- Morning.

- (indistinct conversation)

- Treatment morning - I can't remember. Do you have yours this morning?

- No, I have those pills instead.

- Just them?

- Yes.

- OK? Can you manage that there?

- Yes.

- Righto.

- Sorry, no mail this morning.

- No mail.

- OK? I'll see you later, 'cause you'll be due for treatment.

- Thank you very much.

- Cheerio, Mary.

00:30:00 - MARY: My room is blue. I chose blue because I'm very, very fond of blue. When visitors come, they say that my room is lovely. It's such a restful blue to the eye. Which Group Captain Leonard Cheshire said to me when I took him around the rooms to see them before he opened it officially. And he said, "I hope, Mary, "that you have many, many hours of peace and quiet "in your own little room." And I think it's marvellous. This is my home.

00:30:49 - (quiet conversation)

00:31:13 - WOMAN: It might appear that we have courage but, for me, I haven't got any more courage than the next person.

00:31:23 - WOMAN: We can do things for ourselves and I think they need to see that we need to struggle to be able to do it. I think courage is something you learn with disability and so you just have to learn to cope. You just... you just learn courage as you go along, as circumstances hit you.

00:31:53 - (indistinct conversation)

00:32:32 - WOMAN: That's good. That's good.

00:32:47 - (whirring)

00:33:14 - (laughter)

00:33:18 - WOMAN: Look at that!

00:33:21 - (laughter)

00:33:26 - (indistinct conversation)

00:33:31

- No problems?

- No.

- Alright. Now, if I give a lift, off you go.

00:33:36 - (speaks indistinctly)

- (sneezing)

- Oh, bless you! Bless you.

- (splashing)

00:34:01 [Lady to young girl]:

- Hello, Sarah, love.

- Hello.

- How are you?

- Alright, thank you.

- Um, let me see... What shall we start off with? 'Ten Little Indians'?

- That's a good girl. That's right.

- (young girl plays melody)

- There's a good girl. Yes, that's it. Mind just there, it says... (Sings) Seven little, eight little, nine little Indians... Mind they're all nice and steady. You had an extra 'Indian' in. Oh, would you like just to do the "Seven little....

00:34:46 - WOMAN: We can help able-bodied people by helping them to think a bit more deeply about life because being disabled helps you to think. It's an aid to you to be able to think more deeply about life. It's a privilege, really, um, in... when people are not disabled, they tend to rush around and, you know, they go from day to day without really thinking. I think it's a great privilege for a disabled person to be able to have the chance, the time.

00:35:32 - WOMAN: I wish to be a valid person, not an invalid person.

00:35:39 - (group plays 'Jerusalem')

00:35:44 - (Woman Sings): And did those feet in ancient times walk upon England's mountains green...

00:35:57 - MAN: I think that the able-bodied certainly shouldn't think about, should they ever become disabled or certainly not worry about it or dwell on it because it's, you know, part of life, very much a part of living.

00:36:10 – (Singing) ..countenance divine. Shine forth upon our clouded hills? And was Jerusalem builded there? Among those dark, Satanic mills?

00:36:43 - MAN: I came here for two weeks' therapy. Found my happiness and people that I could talk to. I came, I was accepted and I came to live here in '72. I met a person who is my wife now. The happiness evolved from then and I have been happy ever since. What can I say about a Cheshire home? It is my home, it's my wife's home and we're happy here.

00:37:10 - ALL: (Sing) I will not cease from mental fight. Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand. Till we have built Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land.

00:37:41 - (music concludes)

00:37:45 - (cheering and applause)

00:38:07 - (gentle piano music)

**End of transcription**