**Oral History Transcription - John - Hydon Hill**

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

**Filmed –** 2017

**Start of transcription**

[Text on screen: What is your background?]

00:11 [John]: I grew up in Depression times, in the early 30s and my memories are of total and utter freedom to roam. We roamed everywhere, we played in the street. We lived among the dignified poor. Times were hard in a way, I would wear my dad's cut-down trousers which were shiny at the back. I would have holes in my plimsolls, but everyone else was in the same situation, and there was dignity about it. No sense where, did we feel down-trodden, but maybe my left-wing tendencies were born in those days of not having much.

[Text on screen: How did you get involved at Hydon Hill?]

01:03 - 1973 I joined the support group, which was, had been founded in '72, 1972. And, I would have come up to the home, not so much volunteering in the home, but, we were fundraising mostly, in Cranleigh. It was only later that I came up and helped with my wife to run the shop and to be general befriender, to be known about the home and to get to know people.

[Text on screen: What were your first impressions of Hydon Hill?]

01:48 - I immediately felt among friends, as you enter the Hydon Hill you came to a huge lounge, which has now been replaced by new rooms, and it was the hub of the whole place. You'd meet the Head of Home, he wasn't called a Service Manager, he was called a Head of Home. And you were immediately in the lounge with a whole host of residents. And that's how I remember my first trips here.

[Text on screen: How do you feel about your time at Hydon Hill?]

02:26 - Increasingly felt more blessed after each visit I make, and that's the inscription on the bath that was raised, we raised funds for a bath, just before my wife died, and on it I put something like 'Each time she visited this home she left feeling well blessed'.

02:49 - I'm sad that we're closing down as a fundraising group. But also proud of what we've achieved over 45 years. I would hope very much to continue up here as a volunteer of some kind, if just as a visitor, walking around and talking to people. Certainly coming up with June Long to play bingo in the activities room, where, when I come in they often say 'Have you got any jokes? Not those old ones that you have!'

[Text on screen: What has inspired you to keep volunteering?]

03:34 - Leonard Cheshire. The man. I'd read and re-read, and re-read his biography. So steeped in his life and steeped in sayings about him. One of our judges said 'Leonard Cheshire did more things for more people in this country than any other person in the twentieth century'.

**End of transcription**