

## Ron Vicker's Story



Here Ron Vickers tells his story of how the Hospice helped him and his family.

At the end of July 2011 my wife Sylvia was diagnosed with Cancer of the bowel, liver and lungs and we were informed that it was terminal. Hence my son Andrew and I found ourselves in reception at Dr Kershaw's Hospice. We had tried to care for Sylvia at home but in spite of excellent support from the district nurses and carers we were not able to give Sylvia the 24 hour medical attention she required.

The two Dr Kershaw's volunteers on the reception, must have realised that we were emotional and upset as they calmed us down and explained the procedure for having Sylvia admitted.

The following day Sylvia was brought by ambulance to Dr Kershaw's Hospice and so began her final journey in this remarkable hospice.

Sylvia's needs were explained to us by the nursing staff and they answered any questions we had. I asked to be allowed to stay with Sylvia, and was told that I could have use of a room that had just been completed for just such a time as this.

It is difficult to find the right words for the love and quality of care that my wife received at Dr Kershaw's from the Medical Director, the Hospice staff and volunteers. The kindness and compassion that every request was dealt with was in itself an uplifting experience, the respect and dignity that was at all times offered to Sylvia was a great comfort to the family,

and at this tense and stressful time in our lives we were also shown the same compassion and understanding, for which we will always be grateful.

My wife has always had a strong Christian faith and we are so in debt to the Hospice Chaplain the Reverend Miles Howarth for his ministrations to Sylvia at the chapel and her bedside. I know it meant so much to her and the family.

It is difficult to let go after fifty eight years of happily married life but certainly one of the best decisions we ever made was to make provision for Sylvia to end her time on earth at Dr Kershaw's.

To me Dr Kershaw's will always be a very special place with its own special atmosphere, a place of calm, of tranquillity, a place of quiet understanding, a place with people in all sections working to relieve the suffering of others this special atmosphere is brought about "because they care".

We could never repay the debt we owe Dr Kershaw's but as a family we have tried to raise some money over the last few years and it is a joy to see each week in the local paper so many individuals, groups and communities raising funds for this most worthy of causes.

It is always a pleasure to attend the numerous events held at the Hospice where we meet friends, many of these friendships formed in adversity, they themselves also looking to support the Hospice. For my part I have joined the army of Dr Kershaw's volunteers doing two half days at the Oldham charity shop which I really enjoy.