

ORAL HISTORY RECORDING SUMMARY

'Fighting for our Rights' project

Surname	Johnson
Given names	Jessica
Date of birth	1952
Place of birth	Surbiton, Surrey
Date of interview	30 May 2017
Length of interview	01:05:47
Number of tracks	1
Name of interviewer	Jen Kavanagh

Track 1 of 1 [01:05:47]

Jessica Johnson (JJ) born in 1952 in Surbiton to parents Frederick Charles Chinnick and Dorothy Winfried Mary Chinnick. Lived in Elgar Avenue, Tolworth for most of childhood. Away from home during training to become a nurse, working at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH), London and Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading. Returned to Tolworth to get married in 1974. JJ and husband lived in Ewell for first 10 years of marriage and moved back to Surbiton from 1984. Attended Grand Avenue Primary School, Surbiton and, after completing the 'Eleven Plus' exam, went to Roseberry Grammar School, Epsom for secondary level. Left school at 18 years old. After undertaking combined nursing training at GOSH, JJ worked in Epsom as a Health Visitor. JJ describes her husband, Michael Wesley Johnson (Wes) born on 2nd July 1945 in Surbiton, and goes into detail about his disability. Wes suffered extensive injuries and paraplegia after motorbike accident which occurred around late 1960s. Admitted to Stoke Mandeville Hospital for 9 to 10 months straight after accident. JJ explains more detail about the extent of Wes' injuries and how he was supported after leaving hospital. Talks about how major adaptations and levels of support were required to help Wes to eventually live and work more independently [00:12:20]. JJ provides details about how relationship with Wes developed. JJ studied A Levels. JJ talks about her and Wes' involvement in youth groups, particularly music-oriented activities. Describes first holiday in Jersey with Wes and his family. Explains about further adaptations to residences and Wes' health issues over later years. Mentions introduction of Mobility Scheme – enabled Wes to drive an Invacar. Explains more about transport [00:26:47]. JJ talks about Wes' deteriorating health as he grew older – this presented greater challenges for adaptations. JJ describes Wes' community music activities. Mentions Wes' determination and passion for music despite major health issues. Wes was a tenor at Kingston Choral Society for much of his life, among many other musical roles. JJ reinforces that Wes' musical activities only happened because he received good community care. Mentions Kingston Centre for Independent Living (KCIL) and direct payments – this helped significantly. JJ names Jane Campbell and Robert Reilly as key KCIL staff. Gives more detail about Wes and how he was supported during later life before he passed away [00:39:00]. JJ talks about how she and Wes used public transport. Mentions their participation in accessibility research for 'Transport for London' (TfL). Describes various challenges faced when travelling on public transport. Mentions accessibility issues on trains and usefulness of lifts at Surbiton Station. Explains about Wes' work for local MP Ed Davey and Liberal Democrats [00:45:30]. Talks about adaptations made to Wes' wheelchairs. Mentions travelling on British Airways. Talks about JJ training as health visitor [00:49:20]. Describes challenge between paid care and care as provided by a spouse. Personal assistant term more suitable. Talks about receiving Disability Living Allowance (DDA).

Accident claim paid for home. Mentions other financial support [00:54:15]. Talks about Wes' involvement with KCIL. Describes support from Job Centre and Wes' work with computers. Talks about Wes' death in 2015. Reflects on changes in relationships from services – holistic awareness important. Explains various services they accessed for Wes' needs [01:00:05]. Mentions community nurses and challenges with care. Reflects on need for preventative care. Ends with reflection on how services allowed Wes to live a full life, be his unique self.

End of recording [01:05:47]