



and since his death they've continued that support, donating money to Phyllis Tuckwell and sponsoring its 2017 bi-annual Music in the Park fundraising event."

"I've run the Grim twice," she continues, "which is an eight mile run over the Aldershot tank tracks, through muck and bullets. I do that with the group I do boot camp with, and have raised money for Phyllis Tuckwell through it. And two of the lads who used to play for the football team which Nigel was manager of have run the London Marathon for Phyllis Tuckwell. Nigel also played football for Odiham Croc's who still hold a football match at the start of each season to raise money for Phyllis Tuckwell in his memory."

"Nigel was a very positive person," she smiles. "And **you can't ask for something more positive to come out of something so tragic, than being able to put money back into Phyllis Tuckwell, because the job you do here, the support, is phenomenal.** I was lucky enough to have counselling, which was a big help to me. And the complementary therapists, they were wonderful. They used to come round to visit Nigel every fortnight when he was at home, and I used to get quite stressed and my shoulders would bunch up terribly. They would tell me to come home from work at lunchtime, and they would do my shoulders for me. The counselling was very helpful too. I was very angry for a very long time. The hurt of losing someone never goes away."

"One of the biggest shames is that the people at the Hospice never saw Nigel when he was well, and saw how much fun he was. He really did live life, and loved it. But there was always enough of him left in there for them to know how naughty he was. He's alive and well somewhere else now, and still being naughty!"

We are privileged to care for people like Nigel, Vickie and their family, at probably the most difficult time in their lives, but we can only do this with the generosity of our local community.

We have to raise over £20,000 every day in order to provide care, free of charge, to our patients and their relatives.

For further information about how to support Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care, contact our Fundraising team on:

01252 729446
support@pth.org.uk

Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care

Waverley Lane, Farnham
Surrey GU9 8BL

The Beacon Centre,
Gill Avenue, Guildford,
Surrey GU2 7WW

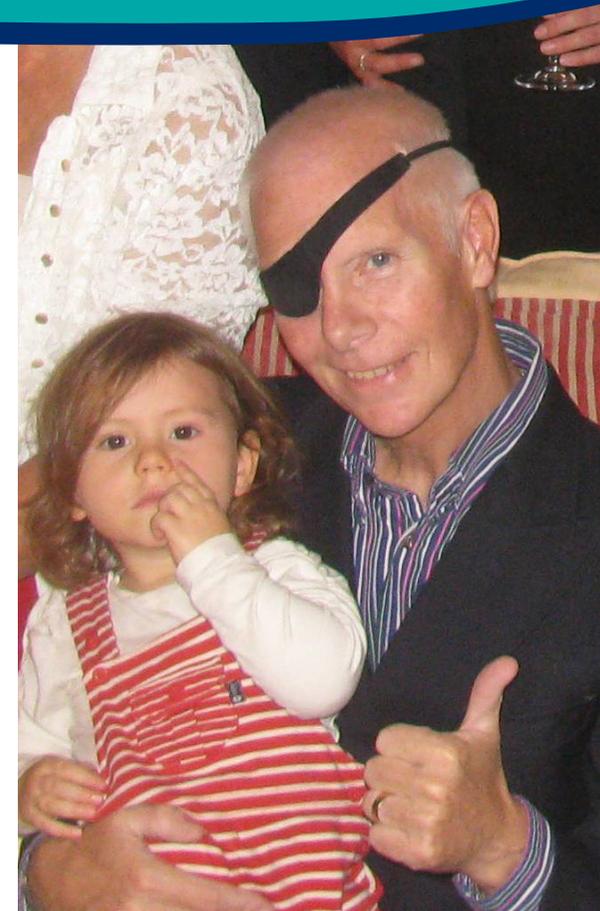
Phyllis Tuckwell Memorial Hospice Ltd.
Registered Number 1063033. Registered Charity Number 264501.

Tel: 01252 729400
Email: mail@pth.org.uk
www.pth.org.uk

May 2017

Our patients are inspiring...

"We were made so welcome."



Nigel and Vickie's Story
In-Patient Unit, pain control and therapies.

Phyllis Tuckwell[®]
Hospice Care
...because every day is precious

Nigel and Vickie's Story



“He was fun, loving, full of life and irreplaceable, with a wicked sense of humour,” says Vickie, whose husband Nigel died on the Hospice’s In-Patient Unit in July 2014. “And he was terribly naughty! I think there would be quite a few people here who’d remember him. He

was a wonderful man and I loved him to bits.”

Nigel was referred to Phyllis Tuckwell after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. “His doctor referred him straight away,” says Vickie, “and within 24 hours your Medical Director, Dr Cate Seton-Jones, was on the phone, offering to come and see us.”

Cate visited Vickie and Nigel at home, where she sat in the garden with them to discuss Nigel’s options.

“As soon as Nigel was diagnosed, he decided that he didn’t want to have chemotherapy,” remembers Vickie. The medical team at Phyllis Tuckwell respected Nigel’s decision, and supported him and his family throughout his illness, offering him respite care so that they could control his symptoms, and doing what they could to help him and his family enjoy the time they had left together.

“I think one of the most valuable things they did for us was pain control,” continues Vickie. “Cate said she understood that Nigel had serious pain issues, and suggested that he come into the Hospice for a week to see what they could do to help. Nigel wasn’t terribly keen to begin with - like a lot of people he thought that once you went into the Hospice that was it, you never came out again, they closed the doors behind you! But it never occurred to me that a hospice would do anything but help. I said to Nigel that if we could get the pain under control, then let’s do it. **We came in for a week, and the difference it made to his life and**

our lives was phenomenal. It meant we could travel, we could have weekends away, we could do all sorts of things, we could go and see people, we went to Italy, we went to France, and we had some fantastic times - because the pain was under control.”

“We had a marvellous six months,” she continues. “But towards the end the pain started to go downhill again. I remember the weekend before he came in for the second time - on the Saturday night the pain was horrific. I had given him everything I could without overdosing him. I phoned the Hospice at about three in the morning and spoke to one of the nurses on the In-Patient Unit. She was just fantastic. She supported me and advised me on what medicines he could have. He went to sleep around six o’clock, but she said that she was still there on the end of the phone and to phone her back if I needed to. By 10am on the Monday morning he was in the Hospice again. They just said ‘come and stay with us, and let’s get your pain sorted out’. That time he was here for six weeks, and it was seriously touch and go at times. One Sunday he wanted to come home, so we brought him home for the day. After lunch he suddenly sat down and said he was really tired. I told him to have a little sleep before I took him back, but as I sat with him, holding his hand, I noticed that his breathing was really slow and shallow. I mentioned it to the doctor at the Hospice when I took him back, and she persuaded me to go home, promising to call me if there were any problems. I didn’t get a call, so I came back at 6am the next day, as I did every morning before work, and found her sitting by his bedside, holding his hand and monitoring his breathing. She’d been with him for hours. He’d had a bad reaction to the morphine, but she’d sorted it all out and given him the right drugs. She was absolutely fantastic.”

In the Summer of 2014, Nigel came to the Hospice for the final time. “We were in a lovely room, with the gardens



outside,” Vickie remembers. “It was beautiful weather. The moment we got there, Nigel rallied. We had a couple of days where he was really feeling very comfortable, very settled. I’d spent so long nursing him that I said to the boys, ‘this is it, we’re just his family now; they can do the nursing.’ It’s so close to being at home and we were made so welcome. It made it much easier for our sons and so many family members to spend time with him. Our boys were 28 and 25 when he died. Lorry was living nearby throughout Nigel’s illness, so he could pop in whenever he wanted to, but Alex lived in Scotland at the time and he just couldn’t bear to leave, so he and I both slept here for the best part of a week.”

“If there’s got to be an end of life, it’s the best place to be. It allowed Nigel to die with dignity, which I shall be forever grateful for. If you can’t die at home, I don’t know anywhere better. Nigel felt the same. If he couldn’t be at home, then he wanted to be here.”

Two months before Nigel died, Vickie decided to take part in a Phyllis Tuckwell fundraising skydive. When they heard about it, both of her sons’ girlfriends offered to do it with her, and when she mentioned it at work five colleagues also volunteered to join in. Sadly Nigel died in the July, so he didn’t see the skydive, which took place the following September. The day after he died another work friend of Vickie’s phoned her and offered to do it too, taking the total of people making the jump for Nigel and PTHC to nine. “The support I’ve had has been fantastic,” she says.

Vickie works for Brooks and Partners, a solicitors’ firm, who have supported her in many ways. “When Nigel was ill, I was able to come and go from the office whenever I needed to,” she says. “Time off was never questioned,

