

Ed: and ah, then everything was going very well, we had, you know, quite a very normal, happy family life until Mary got dementia. Things changed drastically when Mary got dementia. How it was really discovered, she had a couple of little accidents in the car, she drove up to see her GP at the medical centre. The GP realized there was something wrong, she was disorientated, the GP drove her home. He wouldn't let her drive home and we collected the car later. So that was the beginning, and she was referred then to doctor and uh, and they worked out that she had Lewy Body dementia. And that was a complete change of life, you know, and she'd lost her car, which was a big thing, she couldn't drive and then she gradually lost the ability to do other things and that went on slowly. It was ok for a while but it was uh, we lost contact with a lot of our friends and so on, at that time because we were both at home and gave up our sporting activities and that kind of thing.

Interviewer: Did you have to make immediate changes with the things like the socialising? Is that over a period of years?

Ed: No, not years but I'd say for the first two or three years that, you know, she was diagnosed with dementia, I had to tell the doctor and so on. She gradually lost the ability to do things. Not a lot, not for the first say three years, three or four years but there was always the levelling out and then the dip down, level out again and that went on but for the last say three years she would eventually pass away you away you know in 09. That got so severe then, quite tricky, then quite physically, and mentally, and emotionally and it really got to me to continue looking after her on my own. She was on the downgrade too and so, Marie, came down, out daughter and the two of us were able to care for her. With packages from the community, veteran affairs so on and family. The two boys were here, but they were working and with their families. Marie was here fulltime for at least two years. Perhaps a little longer and that made a world of difference. But friends, yes. Mary had a lot of friends from Bridge and from what she was doing before. The fashion parades she was doing, and a lot of those friends kept in contact but gradually sort of faded away to some extent. You could understand, you know.

Interviewer: Effectively it shifts your social circle, doesn't it?

Ed: Oh yeah

Interviewer: It moves your friendship group.

Ed: Contact a lot of people on the phone, you'd be normally out with. Yes, you can keep in touch that way. It certainly did affect the way you sort of plan your life; you know.

Interviewer: That's right. You don't plan for it.

Ed: You can't plan for it. No.

Ed: We had family gatherings at home when she couldn't go out. Somewhere I do have a photo of the last one she went to. I think, At Aaron's place, sitting out at the backyard sitting around the table and Mary had her photo taken at that time and you can see something wrong.