

Faces of Dementia Awareness Week

Each year we find new people to be the faces of our Remember the person materials. So far we have had Phillip, John, Lesley, Christopher and Sue. We would like to introduce you to our new faces: Poopal, Clarice and Caroline.

Clarice, 78

Retired nurse Clarice grew up in Jamaica, in St Ann. She excelled at maths, and as a tomboy spent her days playing cricket and climbing trees. She initially found it hard to adjust to the smog of 1950s London, but after her nursing training she never looked back. As well as raising six children and working as a nurse in the prison service, Clarice sang at her local church, where she also ran the Sunday school and senior citizens' club.



Today, aged 78, Clarice lives in South London close to her family and has been a regular guest at an [Alzheimer's Society dementia café](#). When the dementia gets her down, Clarice turns to prayer and apple turnovers with fresh cream.

'At the café it doesn't matter who you are - everybody's on the same level. The social side is very good and the staff are fantastic'.

Caroline, 55

Caroline is an active member of her local community who leads a busy social life. Living near Skipton with her partner Tony, she joins organised walks with the University of the Third Age twice a week,

sings in a choir, and is an ardent fan of Radio 4.

An oboe player, Caroline studied music and worked in production at BBC World Service and at a record label before retraining in IT. She first noticed signs of dementia when she took a new administrative job - what she had hoped would be 'an easy job' - and found that she could not cope with the duties. She went to the doctor and was diagnosed with [Alzheimer's disease at the age of 52](#).



Caroline is adamant that dementia need not affect your [quality of life](#).

'I don't dwell on it,' she says, 'I just lead a normal life, really.'

Poopal, 76

Poopal is a retired construction worker and dedicated family man. Born in Sri Lanka, Poopal followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, working in the government public works department. Poopal saved up to send both his sons to study in England, where they settled. He and his wife joined them here after retirement, 14 years ago.

'After I came to the UK, my brain was not working properly. I used to go walking and not come back, and when my wife asked me to go shopping, instead of buying eggs I would buy tea. I was very worried. The doctors examined me and gave me medicine. Since then it's been much better. I still forget things - I wouldn't say I'm 100 per cent - but I'm probably 70 per cent.'

Today Poopal is still very active, and enjoys walking and playing badminton in the garden with his son. But above all he lives for his family, and dotes on his sons, his grandchildren and, most of all, his wife.

Dementia Awareness Week 2012 is sponsored by Saga Homecare. Together Alzheimer's Society and Saga Homecare hope to maximise awareness and understanding of dementia across the UK.



Alzheimer's Society National Dementia Helpline

England, Wales and Northern Ireland: 0300 222 11 22

9.00am-5.00pm Monday-Friday

10.00am-4.00pm Saturday-Sunday

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