



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

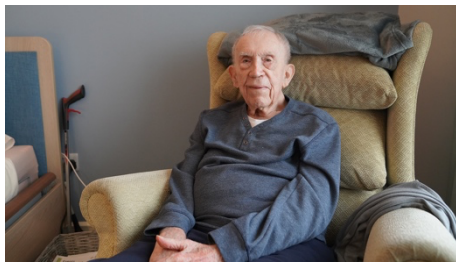
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Foster Care Fortnight: WWII soldier remembers the highs and lows of fostering

A former soldier has recalled the emotional highs and lows he felt when he and his wife fostered vulnerable children.

Ken Pusey said there were times when the emotional toll associated with fostering weighed heavily. But the 96-year-old, who served in the Army during WWII, also said they were among the happiest and proudest times of his life.

Ken, who now lives at Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe, was talking ahead of Foster Care Fortnight, which runs from 15-28 May.



Ken at Royal Star & Garter

Royal Star & Garter is a charity which provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, and also has Homes in Solihull and Surbiton.

Ken met his wife Pam in a furniture factory in High Wycombe, shortly after leaving the Army in 1947.

The couple married in 1949 and started their own family, but soon decided to start fostering as well. Ken said: "My wife loved children. She had seen an advert for fostering and asked if it was something we could do. I knew how much she loved children, so I agreed."

Over a period of around four years in the 1950s, the couple fostered many children, and Ken remembers one child especially well. He said: "We had a little boy who came to us when he wasn't even one, and he stayed with us a long time. He was soon walking and calling me 'Dadda'. One Tuesday night I came home from work, and Pam told me he had gone - his mother had come and picked him up. I thought we were going to keep him, and I sat down and started crying. I was so attached to him and it really hurt. I said to Pam that I didn't want to do this anymore, that I couldn't go through the pain again because it was heart-breaking, so we stopped."



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However, within a few months, they found the calling to help vulnerable children too much to ignore, and returned to fostering. Looking back, Ken said: "We fostered because my wife really loved children, and it was a really happy time. There were tough periods, but we knew we were helping disadvantaged children. We wanted to do what was best for them. In those days you didn't get paid, we did it to help. The boy that I mentioned who left abruptly came to us with only two nappies, and left with a suitcase full of clothes. We did it for the children."



Ken, seen here with his wife Pam, before their marriage in 1949

Ken served in the Army from 1944-1947. During WWII he helped build Bailey bridges in mainland Europe to support the Allied advancement into Nazi Germany.

He has been at Royal Star & Garter since September 2022, where he enjoys one-to-one sessions with the in-house Physiotherapist, as well as lots of music activities. He said: "I think the Home is wonderful... The facilities are unbelievable. I complain at nights because the days go by so quickly! There's always something to do and the time flies."

Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe is welcoming new residents. For more information on this, or to work at the Home, go to www.starandgarter.org/hw

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About Royal Star & Garter



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

Our charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

Twitter: @starandgarter

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Royal Star & Garter
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