



Bob & Jo Stovell

Derbyshire Fire & Rescue

“The Fire Fighters Charity put a spark back into my dad that had been all but extinguished”



In August 2009, recently-retired firefighter Bob Stovell and his wife, Mo, were involved in a motorcycle collision that left Bob fighting for his life and Mo dying from her injuries.

Bob spent a year in a hospital bed, undergoing treatment and physiotherapy for his injuries, and eventually was allowed to go home in a wheelchair, told he would never walk again. This was where his mental health took a turn for the worse.

“He would cry his eyes out and say he didn’t want to live,” says his daughter, Jo. “I can’t imagine how hard it must have been, to have spent his whole life as a fit firefighter looking after people, then to suddenly be so reliant on others.”

It was at this point The Fire Fighters Charity became once more involved in Bob’s story. As he had visited Jubilee House in his career, the family knew he’d be happier among peers.

“The team wasn’t afraid to let me try and see what I could do,” says Bob. “Instead of saying ‘no, you can’t, they’d say ‘can you?’. They were the ground roots to start me getting better, pushing me enough so that when I came home I could push myself.”

Between his visits to Penrith and time spent practising when he got home, Bob managed to progress from a wheelchair to a Zimmer frame. Now, nearly nine years since the accident, he just uses sticks to walk while out and about, and manages without anything when he’s at home.

“The Fire Fighters Charity put a spark back into him that had been all but extinguished,” says Jo, who has left half of her estate to the Charity in her will, as a way of saying thank you. “They saved my dad’s life, there are no two ways about it. He wanted to give up, but they didn’t let him.”

www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/bob-and-jo-stovell

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