

RESTRICTED**STATEMENT****Number: S211**

Age	[77]
Statement Date	[16/APR/2004]
Signed Name	[E J STEVENS]
Telephone No	
Postcode	Code A
Date Of Birth	
Occupation	[RETIRED AMBULANCE DRIVER]
Address	Code A
Forename 1	[ERNEST JOHN]
Surname	[STEVENS]

I live at the address known to the Police. I am the widower of Jean Irene STEVENS /N31 3 , who died on 22nd May 1999 (22/05/1999) at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital /C44 , Bury Rd, Gosport. I have been asked to provide some background information about my wife.

My wife was born on [**Code A**] in Gosport, Hampshire. Her parents were Harry /N1240 and Eleanor Victoria COLLINGS /N1241 . She was one of five children, all girls. Two of her sisters died in their teens due something like diphtheria or T.B. and her other sisters, Lillian and Iris died around the age of 70 years and 80 years.

Harry COLLINS died around the age of 79 years of bronchial pneumonia and Eleanor died around the age of 69 years from lung cancer.

My wife worked throughout her life as a shop assistant or canteen assistant.

We had two children, Carol /N1242 in 1946 and June in /N318 1949. Both pregnancies were straightforward with no complications.

My wife was relatively healthy but in 1994 she began to experience stomach trouble, she was experiencing a lot of pain and discomfort.

She was admitted to Haslar Hospital /L14 in Gosport for an exploratory operation, during which they removed her appendix. The problem persisted and in 1996 she was again admitted to Haslar where she was diagnosed as suffering from diverticulitis. She underwent surgery and had a small part of her bowel removed.

She went on to have two further operations on her bowel. Apparently she had lesions in her bowel due to the operations and it was this that was causing her pain.

As a result of this my wife was in constant pain and was prescribed pain killers.

She also suffered from slight arthritis in her back, but despite this, she was fully mobile and able to get about without assistance.

On Sunday 25th April 1999 (25/04/1999) we spent the day at home. Jean had cooked a roast dinner and tidied everything away as usual. We had our usual night cap before Jean went to get ready for bed.

I heard a thud and went to see what had happened, I found Jean lying semi conscious in the bathroom . I called an ambulance and Jean was taken to Haslar Hospital in the early hours of Monday 26th April.

By visiting hours that evening Jean was propped up in bed fully conscious. She had lost the use of her left arm and leg but was fully alert and able to speak.

She had lost the ability to swallow and was being fed through a tube. She had to learn to swallow again in order to be moved to a rehabilitation ward before she could come home.

At one point it was thought that Jean had suffered a small heart attack and she was admitted into the CCU (coronary care unit) at Haslar overnight as a precaution. There were no other attacks and Jean only spent one night in the unit.

I spent everyday with Jean and I could see her getting better. The stroke had only effected her left side.

Jean made very good progress and was reviewed by a Dr. LORD /N68 /A1167 /F1 , from the Gosport War Memorial Hospital. Dr LORD said that Jean had a sufficient enough swallow for her to accept her on to the rehabilitation ward at the Gosport War Memorial hospital. It was arranged that Jean would be transferred to the Gosport War Memorial hospital on Thursday 20th May 1999 (20/05/1999).

During the evening of Wednesday 19th May 1999 (19/05/1999), Jean was visited by June /A793 /S209 /F2 and her husband Ted /N1070 /A793 /S210 /F3 . I had spent the day with Jean as usual and June had come in after she had finished work.

We were all in good spirits as Jean was moving towards coming home. We were planning a big family party for when she came out of the War Memorial hospital.

I left Jean happy and in good spirits. I was told that Jean would be transferred to Deaalus ward around lunch time the following day and that I should visit her at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital after 1pm (1300 hrs).

At 1.30pm (1330hrs) on Thursday 20th May 1999 (20/05/1999) I arrived at the ward. had to wait to see Jean as the nurse said that they were settlin g her in.

I was shown into a cubicle opposite the nurses desk, Saw that Jean was lying in bed with her eyes closed. I would describe her as being in a coma. She did not move , she did not speak, she did not respond in anyway to my being there. I was stun ned by her condition.

I stayed with Jean all night, I sat next to her bed and held her hand.

I did not know what was going on or why Jean had deteriorated so quickly. No one came and told me what was happening. I was totally shocked and distraught.

I could hear the noise of a machine coming from Jeans bed and I could smell a sick ly smell. I used to work as an ambulance man and I recognised the smell as being morphine.

On Friday 21st May 1999 (21/05/1999), at some point during the afternoon, I was approached by a man called Phillip /N1192 /A1044 /F4 . He was a charge nurse or 'sister' on the ward. He said to me something along the lines of 'your wife is in a lot of pain, can we have your permission to double her morphine?'

I felt very confused and upset , I did not understand what was happening but I was very concerned for my wife's well being. I thought that if the staff thought my wife was in pain then they knew best. I gave my 'permission' to Phillip fo r my wife's morphine to be increased.

He told me that he would phone Dr. BARTON /N34 for her permission to increase the dose.

Around 8.30pm (2030hrs) on Saturday 22nd May 1999 (22/05/1999) Jean died.

From the time I saw her at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital, I only saw her open her eyes once.

I never heard her make any sound at all, nor did I see her give any physical indication that she was in pain or discomfort.

I know that my wife had a syringe driver /C43 , I saw the tube going into her stomach and I could hear the sound of its motor.

After Jean died the driver was still going and I asked the staff to switch it of f after about half an hour as I could not stand the sound of it.

Jeans death certificate gives her cause of death as Cerebrovasculer accident, wh ich I understand to be a stroke.

Her death certificate was signed by Dr. BARTON.

My wife is buried at Ann Hill Cemetery, Gosport.

Whilst Jean was at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital, I never saw or spoke to any doctors and the only person who spoke to me about my wife's condition was the male nurse Phillip on that one occasion.