

# The **RVH** difference

It may not be every bride's idea of the perfect setting, but for Mary Hunter and Kevyn Allard the third-floor recreation room at Renfrew Victoria Hospital was the ideal wedding chapel.

After all, they got engaged in a hospital room just one floor away.

This newly-married couple have had an immersion course in the concept of "in sickness and in health".

Mary's first visit to RVH was because of a heart problem. That led to the insertion of a stent at the Ottawa Heart Institute, and everyone figured Mary was on the road to recovery. She just couldn't get back on her feet, though, so another visit to RVH instigated a round of tests. It was on November 14 that Mary and Kevyn got the bad news—she had kidney cancer that had already moved into the bones.



"It was shocking," Mary admitted. "Just those couple of words."

Her next memory is of the nurse who gave her a warm hug and helped dry her tears.

"It took away the pain," recalled Mary. "She was a Godsend. She was there when I needed her... I don't know how I would have made it through without her."

Mary soon had an even more radical and inspirational diversion. Just days after her cancer diagnosis, Kevyn who was dealing with cellulitis of the leg in the hospital bed next to her, asked her to marry him. After 16 years together, he decided it was time to make it official. Mary immediately accepted his proposal and began the work of planning a wedding from a hospital bed. She was joined in the task by her family and friends... and by the nurses who were caring for her.

"They were more excited than I was," she said with a chuckle. "Everyone was fantastic."

On April 4, the third floor of RVH was abuzz. A beautiful homemade cake was delivered. A bouquet of flowers arrived for the bride. Her friends carefully dressed her in a lacy white camisole and shawl, placing a veiled tiara on her head.

Mary's father-in-law walked beside her stretcher, pushed up the aisle by her nurses.

"It was happy," Mary stated, remembering her thoughts as Kevyn bent down to kiss his new wife. "Yeah, I do love this big guy."

Family and friends enjoyed a wedding dinner and reception in the recreation room.

And as a gesture of appreciation for the whole new level of personal care they received, Mary and Kevyn had an important rule: In lieu of wedding gifts, the guests were asked to make donations to the RVH CT fund.

"If I can do some good, I want to do it," said Mary, who had to travel to Ottawa for her own CT scans. She understands the importance of having this essential diagnostic tool available in Renfrew.

There was one group that bent the no-gift rule. The second floor nursing staff presented Mary with a silver angel pin and a card they had all signed. Mary shook her head in wonder as she thought of the gesture.

"They mean everything," she said. "When you're in this position, it's the care you get that makes the difference."

"I'm one lucky girl," she concluded.



## You can help make the RVH difference

There are a number of ways you can contribute to the Renfrew Victoria Hospital Foundation. Please call us to learn more about cash donations, gifts-in-kind and the options for deferred donations through bequests, insurance policies, annuities, residual interest and memorial donations.

**Make RVH your charity of choice. Please call the RVH Foundation office at 613-432-4851 ext. 263, or visit us online at [www.rvhfoundation.com](http://www.rvhfoundation.com) to learn more about how you can contribute to *the RVH difference*.**