Robert and I have had a wonderful life, we still do. But over time it became obvious that we needed extra help.

It was nine years ago when it all began. I didn’t know it was Alzheimer’s in the beginning. Robert didn’t realise there was anything wrong and my local doctor just put it down to memory loss.

In the beginning, he began to get lost and walk away. We had just moved to an area we weren’t familiar with and I remember a few times, Robert would go for a walk and just not come back. It was then that I got our dog, Augustus. Robert didn’t get lost when he had the dog, he said he had to be responsible for both of them.

I’m a proactive person so as Robert’s disease progressed, I got him involved in different activities to keep him busy and to help me with the caring role. At first he attended activity centres then as his condition worsened I found an excellent carer with the local council. I’d seen this man around for a while and knew he was a good man so I requested him specifically.

Robert is a wordsmith so I would make lunch for them both and they would spend the afternoon chatting and doing crossword puzzles. This went on for many years until Robert became difficult and would start saying “No, I won’t” when I suggested things.

“We were a couple that were always linked together, whatever we did, we did it together. 60 years we’ve been married.”

Letter from Marlee

Robert and I have had a wonderful life, we still do. But over time it became obvious that we needed extra help.
It was my own health problems that were a turning point. With the stress of it all I would have dizzy attacks and collapse all over the place and it became obvious that I needed extra help. While I was having medical processes done, Robert was in respite care and it was then that the staff took over and told me that he really needed 24 hour care. He’s now in the local nursing home, just five minutes away by car.

Robert and I have spent our 60 wonderful years of marriage barely apart. We worked and travelled together and it was such a life change when he went into full time care. For the first time in my life I was living without him, my companion for so many years.

I have an interest in medical research and I know the researchers will find a cure for Alzheimer’s disease. Not in my lifetime, but it will happen.

Yours truly, Marlee