Service For Ronald & Ellen Monica Williams, thoughts on their life.

Ronald Williams was born on 24th April 1940 in Mountain Ash, Mid Glamorgan, Wales.

The son of Albert Williams, a miner and later a mechanical engineer for The British Coal Board, and Alice Williams.

It was a small family, Ron had one sister, Marion, and his main passion in his early life was Rugby (naturally) and he was a gifted player but had to give up playing as the weakness in his left leg caused by catching polio as a child worsened.

He never fulfilled his dream of playing for rugby for Wales, but he did fulfil another as a Fireman on The Flying Scotsman.

Ellen Monica Williams was born on 21st July 1941 in New Ross, County Wexford, Ireland.

The daughter of James Byrne, a master tailor, and Annie Byrne.

Ellen or ‘Moni’ to her family was one of 11 children, 7 brothers and 3 sisters.

Moni was a tomboy and loved getting up to mischief with her brothers, especially her twin brother Eddie, and liked nothing more than climbing apple trees, flying home made kites and racing go carts.

Ron had originally followed his father’s (and grandfather’s) footsteps as a coal miner, but seeing first hand the dangers of the job and the devastating affect on his fathers and grandfather’s health he soon realised this was not the career path he wanted, and moved to London in 1959 to find work.

Moni, along with her sister Francis also moved to London at this time, and she soon found work as canteen assistants in a British Rail Hostel in Acton

And this is how she met Ron, who now had a job with British Rail as a Fireman (or Stoker) and was staying at the hostel.

From the moment they met they were inseparable, and they married in East Acton on 14th October 1961.

They moved to Hammersmith and started a family with the birth of their first son David Anthony Williams in June 1962.

Moni & Ron soon realised that something was wrong, as David had trouble walking from a very early age, and also had trouble forming words, but their concerns were not shared by several specialists who originally thought David was just slow to develop, but by the age of 5 it was very apparent that this was not the case, and by age 7 he was diagnosed with a rare degenerative disease that would leave left him severely disabled for the rest of his life.

Their 2nd son, Edward James Williams was born 4 years later, on 10th July 1966, and Moni never tired of reminding Ron that he was largely absent for the first few days as the world cup had started the on the 11th

Now with 2 children, Ron and Moni left Hammersmith and moved to a larger flat in Putney, South West London.

Ron was now a driver for British Rail and Moni, who always had a strong work ethic did secretarial work and also worked part time as a cleaner for several families in Putney, and later casually recalled to a star shocked Edward that one of her clients was Sean Connery.

David’s condition worsened as he grew older, and by the age of 10 he needed full time 24 hour care, but this did not deter Ron & Moni from wanting another child, and Anna Louise Williams was born on the 28th December 1971.

But almost unbelievably, Anna was also born with the same rare degenerative disease as David, and Ron now 31, and Moni, 30, already struggling with a growing David, now had a second severely disabled children to care for.

Moni and Ron now entered the most extraordinary period of their long life together, and as they devoted their entire lives to caring for their beloved and special children, David & Anna.

Ron would work nights, come home, have a few hours of sleep and then care for David & Anna in the morning, and Moni would work in the morning and then care for David and Anna through the night..

But Moni & Ron were determined that their children’s lives would not be defined by their disabilities, nor remembered for the weeks of sleepless nights, instead theirs was a household full of music, laughter, play and love.

Moni & Ron were supported by their extended family in Ireland and Wales, neighbours and close friends, they all helped out as much as they could, and all loved David & Anna unconditionally, and always made them feel special, and the excitement and joy on their faces when their aunts, uncles and cousins and friends came to visit them was a sight to behold.

And this level of care and devotion continued for many years, and it’s a tribute to the love of Mon, Roni and extended family and friends that both David & Anna both lived far longer than the medical profession expected, and I have no doubt that is because both David & Anna had so much to live for, so much love to give, and so much to receive.

By 1977 David had grown into a young adult and Moni was finding it difficult to provide the care he needed, so Ron retired from British Rail to care full time for David & Anna, and Moni took a job as a Medical Records Clerk at Queen Marys Hospital, she loved working at the hospital and rose through the ranks until she became a manager of the Private Patients & Overseas Visitors Office.

Attitudes towards the disabled were very different back then, and there was very little support from the government or local councils at the time, and in 1979 Moni & Ron somehow found the time and energy to help run and organise fundraising for a new charity, Contact A Family, which specialised in supporting the parents and siblings of disabled children.

Meeting and supporting parents who were in the same position gave Moni & Ron new purpose, Ron especially, always so quiet and shy gained in confidence as he became an accomplished fundraiser and treasurer, and they made many lifelong friends during this time, some of whom are here today.

David sadly passed away in Sept of 1982 aged 20

After 19 fulfilling years at Queen Marys, Moni retired in 1996 and a new chapter in their lives began, and they moved away from London and settled in what would be their last home, a bungalow in Golden Miller Lane, Polegate.

Anna spent her final and happiest year here, she loved being in the garden watching her mum tend to the flowers, and she passed away peacefully at home in July 1997.

Now most married couples would slow down and take it easy after 35 years of providing 24 hour care to their children, but Moni & Ron loved to help people and keep busy so they became carers, cooking meals and visiting elderly residents to keep them company, and taking them on shopping trips. They never stopped helping or caring for people.

Now in their 60’s, Ron & Moni found a new passion, travel, and for the next decade they roamed far and wide, with trips to Europe, the USA, and Canada.

Everywhere they went they made lifelong friends, you couldn’t help but be drawn into their orbit, as they were so full of warmth, laughter and generosity.

But eventually ill health forced Ron & Moni to slow down a bit, Ron wasn’t as mobile as he used to be, Moni had always struggled with Asthma and chest infections so they gave up the globetrotting, and they spent their final very happy decade together tending to their beautiful garden, cooking for their neighbours and friends, and in the evening they would sit together in the conservatory, doing crosswords together and reading.

Tragedy struck Ron & Moni during the Christmas of 2020,

Ron’s sister Marion passed away from coronavirus just days before Christmas, and on Christmas eve Ron fell very ill, he was rushed to hospital and a week later was diagnosed with late stage lymphoma.

But during this period Ron had contracted coronavirus and had to be re-admitted to hospital, Moni had now also fell ill soon after and also had to be admitted to hospital, and she too had tested positive for coronavirus.

They were now on the same ward, and at Ron’s insistence, Moni was moved next to him so they could be together, because they had always been together.

And on Thursday 21st January 2021 Ron and Moni passed away peacefully together.

Ron & Moni were inseparable for 60 years, they devoted their lives to their 3 children, David, Edward & Anna, and they were just as in love on their last day together as they were on their wedding day

They did everything together, they cared and loved and fought for their children together, they grieved together, found the strength to go on together, and finally they died together, and they will be together forever.