

## **FRAN MILLER**

Fran was born on 18/12/1944 at Bocket Hall. She remembered her mother telling her that the room had Chinese wallpaper. Her parents Eileen and Lawrence lived at Grange Park north London and during WW2 pregnant women living in London were taken out from London to the countryside north of London to have their babies. After the birth her mum and Fran went back to London. The house they were living in was rented so when the owner died the house was sold and they had to move out. Her father was working in Welwyn Garden City but when Fran was 20 years old they moved to Digswell, rented a house and then bought a house.

Her husband Michael (Mick) was an artist and he got a fellowship to Digswell House and that is where they met. She worked as a secretary at Smith Kline and French in Welwyn Garden City. She also did part-time teaching in pottery. They got married in 1968. They had three children: a girl born in 1969 in the QE2, a girl born at home and a boy born at the Red House Harpenden.

Mick got a job at St George's school, Harpenden, as housemaster and head of the arts department. They moved there in the mid-1970s and lived at the school for 5 years. The house in Station Road, Wheathampstead was bought in circa 1975. It was in a bad state and had no central heating etc. Mick would go over when he wasn't teaching, to do repairs and decorate, before they moved in. There was a cellar in the house with a well. They noticed in part of the garden the soil looked slightly different so they dug up the soil and discovered an air raid shelter below ground with steps down and found bed springs and a cathedral stove down there. The owner hadn't told them about it!

Fran still lives in the house in Wheathampstead.

**[These are Fran's memories, shared in conversation with Nancy Hale, in August 2024.**

**Photo below is of the air-raid shelter in her garden in Station Road]**

