

# LYNTON COX

Lynton and his brothers (Mervyn and Ashley) were born after the war. Lynton now lives in Stamford, Lincolnshire. His brother Ashley lives in Hemel Hempstead and his other brother, Mervyn, still lives in Marford Road, Wheathampstead.

Their parents Ron and Edith (Peggy) Cox, lived in Marford with Peggy's Mother (Emily Bangs) and Grandmother (Mary Jane Bangs) during the war years. Peggy worked at Helmets during the war years and was a member of the Auxiliary Fire Brigade throughout. She told stories of fire watching from the Church tower. Peggy married Ron in 1941, shortly before he went off to North Africa in 'Operation Torch' (a joint operation with the Americans to run Rommel out of North Africa). Whilst serving here in Tunisia and Algeria Ron was charged with supplying ordnance to the front line. He also spent time in field hospital, the victim of contaminated Hepatitis vaccine and shrapnel wounds.

Peggy's parents housed evacuees from London, from the time the evacuation began until peace was declared. These evacuees were a family - John and Hilda Hinton, their daughter Valery (just a toddler at the time) and their Gran 'aunty Jenny'. John Hinton was in a reserved occupation, working at the Mount Pleasant sorting office (GPO) in Clerkenwell. He was a keen cyclist and would cycle every weekend the 60 miles there and back, from their home in Fulham, west London, to Wheathampstead. Hilda, Jenny and Valery lived with the Bangs' whilst he lived in London during the week.

They were lovely friendly people, typical Londoners, and they became like members of the family. Being townies, they appreciated living in the country for the first time. London right up to the fifties was rather dreary, quite unlike today, with soot encrusted buildings and much smoke and fog. Peggy always called Hilda the sister she always wished she had. They remained good friends with Lynton's parents after the war, even spending a couple of Christmases together in the nineteen sixties.

Hilda and John had three more children after the war. We were invited to all the weddings. John, Hilda, Jenny and Valerie are all now deceased and we have lost touch with the other children, but the fond memories still loom large when we think back to those days.

[written by Lynton Cox 2025 and passed to Lizzie Holland for inclusion in the Wheathampstead History Society's WW2 exhibition]