

Alice Darnell was born in Scarborough in 1928 in 45 Quay Street, which is now the gap between the Lancaster Inn and the 3 Mariners, the oldest crooked frame building in Scarborough. The house was damaged by debris from an aeroplane racing in the Kings Cup air race on 10th September 1937. Two aircraft racing hit air turbulence low over the castle and crashed.

Alice had a twin sister and they had a joint marriage many years later. Alice remembers the great community spirit in the Old Town where nobody locked their doors and people popped into each others houses for chats. The children all played together in the street, on the Castle slopes, or around the harbour. People had few belongings but shared their lives with each other. Her grandmother (Eaves) grew up on a farm at Peasholm and met her husband who was a fisherman from the Old Town.

Alice went to Friarage School where they were given milk each day and had a nap in the afternoons. Milk was delivered to their homes and came in an urn which was poured out into each person's jug. They had no fridges only pantries. The corner shops sold most things and the Market seemed miles away. A walk up to Boyes was an adventure to look at the toys in the window.

The first signs of war came when everyone started blacking out their windows. It was a frightening time. Evacuees came from Hull and the school began to teach Scarborough children in the mornings one week and afternoons the next. The children then spent the other half of the day going for walks, reading or dancing down at the Olympia ballroom. They had to leave their books in their desks for the evacuees to use and sometimes left them notes asking their names. There were no cookery or needlework classes as there were no spare ingredients or materials. Alice spent time practicing for air raids, climbing under tables and into cold damp air raid shelters.

Alice enjoyed going to the Bethel Mission Chapel on Sandside which had wonderful oil paintings on the walls (now Cielos café). The chapel organised trips out and as a child she remembers how far from home she felt when they went to Throxenby Mere, near Yorkshire Coast College.

At 14, Alice left school and was never given a certificate. She went to work straight away for a dry cleaner where they cleaned the Service Men's uniforms. People were not afraid to go out at night because of so many uniformed men around. Alice worked for them for 8 years followed by Marks and Spencers, Graham School and Boyes. She is still working for Boyes to supplement the small pension even though she is well past the age of retirement.