



Balsall Heath
Local History Society

The GAZETTE

JUNE 2015

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The Balsall Heath Local History Society was founded in 1979 with the aim of promoting interest in our local history. To meet our aims we work with local schools and community groups organising exhibitions and events. We have also produced several publications. We are a registered charity and rely on grants and donations to achieve our aims. For more information on our work, or to volunteer and help please contact us.

WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

The Women & Theatre's heritage project, **'Women's Work'** will be at **Balsall Heath Library from 15th June - 3rd July.**

Women's Work is a touring exhibition exploring the experiences of female factory workers in World War One. It is part of the Women's Work, Women & Theatre's heritage research project involving local women. To learn more about this project go to www.womenandtheatre.tumblr.com



LEFT: Women at work making brushes at Leng's Factory on Sherbourne Road. Taken sometime during the First World War.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday 30th July 7:30

The Venture

(Malvern Street by the farm)

David Hughes: From Variety to Verdi by Patrick Baird

Patrick Baird recounts the life of the locally born singer (*right*), who is fondly remembered and enjoyed by many to this day.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 28th Birmingham Lives History Fair
at Girl Guide Head Quarters, Trefoil House, Blucher Street, Near Ellis Street, Holloway Head, Birmingham B1 1QL

July 4th Balsall Heath Carnival

The annual Carnival takes place at Pickwick Park with a procession around the streets.

July 19th Dramatic Canal Walk

We have a walk along the Birmingham to Worcester canal towpath. This is a historical drama trail with music and will be accompanied by a canal boat. We start at 11:30 in Worcester Wharf (outside the Mailbox waterfront) and arrive at 2:30 pm (or thereabouts) at Bournville Station. Bring a packed lunch as we will stop for a break around 1pm. These walks are always great fun and we take a lot of people (see the picture to the right). Places are limited so please get in touch to reserve a spot. £5 each.



GHOST STREETS OF BALSALL HEATH

An exciting exhibition of photographs at The Old Print Works, Moseley Road from 9th to 12th July



Pictures courtesy of: Janet Mendelsohn, late 1960s. Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections, University of Birmingham

During the 50th anniversary celebrations for Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in 2014, an amazing collection of images came to light. Taken by American photographer and filmmaker **Janet Mendelsohn** as part of her studies, they document the neighbourhoods of Balsall Heath and Highgate in 1968, at a time of controversy over housing conditions, traveller camps and the sex industry.

While all of these issues are touched on by Mendelsohn's work, her pictures also capture the everyday humanity of these places, teasing out stories that would often be ignored or distorted by media coverage. In particular she was fascinated by the child's eye view of Balsall Heath, and explored the dizzying freedoms as well as the gnawing poverty

For the first time a selection of Mendelsohn's work will be presented as part of a major new exhibition at Ikon Gallery in early 2016. Preparing the ground for this show will be a range of activities designed to illuminate the images and make them more widely accessible, and Flatpack's contribution will be a temporary installation in the place where many of the photographs were taken.

Using images and archive film to map out the huge changes that the area went through in the 60s and 70s, *Ghost Streets of Balsall Heath* will be partly shaped by the people who come to see it.

The gallery at the Old Print Works above Ort Café is to host the exhibition in July. The Gazette will feature it in our July newsletter.

For **further information** on the exhibition contact Chloe Lund at C.Lund@bham.ac.uk.

Presented in partnership with the University of Birmingham, Queens University Belfast, Library of Birmingham and Some Cities, and supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

