



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.

NIGHT OF TERROR

The Carlton cinema incident,
75 years on...



(Above) Inside the cinema in the days after the bombing



(Above and below) Remembering the victims 2015
(Right) The Balsall Heath blitz display tent



BALSALL HEATH REMEMBERS

Sunday 25th October saw the Balsall Heath community gather together at a special event to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the bombing of the Carlton Picture House.

Also attending were relatives of some of the 20 killed in the incident, along with representatives from the Birmingham Air Raid Remembrance Association, standard bearers and a bugler.

Time was also taken to celebrate the closeness and togetherness of the local people in coping with the incident, and the community spirit which is still so evident in the Balsall Heath of 2015.

As time went on during the commemorations it was easy to imagine those events unfolding 75 years earlier – people preparing to go out to the cinema and the ARP wardens preparing for whatever might happen that night.

What happened started at 7:52pm with the warning of an air raid. By the morning the Carlton cinema had turned from a place of entertainment and respite, to somewhere forever remembered as one of the worst incidents of the Birmingham blitz.





To mark Moseley Road Baths' recent inclusion on the World Monuments Fund Watch List, as well as the building's 108th birthday, the *Friends of Moseley Road Baths* are holding an **Open Day on Saturday, October 31st 2015 from 10am-4pm.**

Friends of Moseley Road Baths update

Anniversary Open Day - 31st October 2015



The centre piece of the day will be a re-staging of the Opening Ceremony at 2pm. There will also be conducted tours of the building at 11am, 12noon, 1pm and 3pm.

Adding to the ambience will be Edwardian period musical entertainment and birthday cake!



CHRIS UPTON

Chris, who died recently after a short battle with cancer, will be remembered for his wonderfully knowledgeable and readable work on all aspects of Birmingham History. A memorial service in his memory is to be held at 11am on Tuesday 1st November at Birmingham Cathedral. We extend our condolences to his family.

Chris was always ready and willing to offer his support to fellow historians. A lovely and dear man, who will be sadly missed indeed. Chris lived in Balsall Heath and took a keen interest in the Society. His piece we re-print here, though not strictly "historical", is typical of his style and wit.

THE OLD MO IS HOT TO GO *Chris Upton (Birmingham Post 2012)*

My local pub in Balsall Heath has started doing hot food.

It has – long since – served up the odd pasty or cheese bap, but this is an altogether bigger enterprise. Working on the assumption that most of us go straight from the pub to the curry house – the route from the Old Mo to the Shereen Kadah is practically processional – the landlord has saved his customers the walk and taken on his very own balti chef.

The evening of the Champions' League final saw Birmingham's traditional holy trinity in full force: balti, beer and football. The trade was brisk and the smell unsettling, if you think you've already eaten enough for one night. I may have to start going to the pub with a nose peg on, just to resist temptation.

My companions have already succumbed, ordering up late-night samosas and shish kebabs, and claiming that they "missed dinner" or "never eat much at 6 o'clock".

The result of all this is that I'm beginning to fully appreciate the purgatory of the drinker in the diners' pub. Once he had the hostelry to himself. His pub was a place for a pint, not a three-course dinner and an AA rosette.

First he notices that the old sign has been removed, and the Nag's Head has become Nigel's at the Nag's Head. Then the outside of the place is repainted in grey or light blue. This – in case you haven't noticed – is the livery of the gastro pub.

Next he is banned from the lounge, and the room is turned into a Habitat showroom, with puzzling abstract art on the walls. When he orders a pint of bitter they ask him if he has a reservation. He remembers being told not to bring his kids into the pub, but now the place is full of little Jessicas and Joshuas, being reminded that "they love crab cakes", and chasing each other round the tables as if they were at a wedding.

Then the bar is also kitted out in art and ceramics from "a charming little pottery down the road", and he finds himself squeezed into a small corner of the bar next to the charity collection box, and the diners look at him as if he were an alcoholic.

And that's when he starts buying his beer from Sainsbury's instead.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday 26th November 7:30

The Venture

(Malvern Street by the farm)

CHILDREN'S EMIGRATION HOMES by Val Hart

John T. Middlemore founded the Children's Emigration Homes in St. Luke's Road, Birmingham. The emigration of children to Canada began in 1873, and the first receiving home was Guthrie Home in London, Ontario. Some 5,000 children came to Canada with Middlemore.

Val brings her extensive research along for what is sure to be an engrossing and thought provoking talk, about a topic which is still largely unknown to many people.