



Balsall Heath
Local History Society

The **GAZETTE**

NOVEMBER 2016

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***BHLHS** 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.*

BALSALL HEATH ON THE CARDS

The online auction site Ebay regularly has Balsall Heath related postcards for sale. It is amazing how many there are and how many “new” views keep turning up. As well as the pictorial views it is common to see cards for sale listed with details of who they were sent to – a real potential bonus for genealogists! Prices of cards on Ebay vary wildly, depending on how “rare” the seller believes the card to be. Below are some cards that have appeared recently.



TOP LEFT: Brighton Road bridge **TOP RIGHT:** New Inn on Moseley Road
BOTTOM LEFT: Congregational Church on Stoney Lane **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Moseley Road

SWEET MEMORIES ARE FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH

The History Society is working on a new publication based on people’s memories of sweets. Whenever we get to talk about old times sweets are certain to pop up at some point in the conversation. They were one of the most popular items in our Diamond Balsall Heath selection too, so this should be a very well received publication.

Just to give a “flavour” of things...

“All the chocolate bars seem to have shrunk now”

“The Sweet Shop was a large part of our lives. The shopkeeper took the big jar from the self and weighed out our sweets, dropping them into the scales though his fingers. Then the sweets were tipped into a small white paper bag. Most sweets were sold by the “quarter” which was 4 ounces”.

“ I remember my pockets containing little paper bags of sweets all stuck together.”

(Mars Bars) “ We used to cut them up into slices and share them between the whole family.”



At a dance in aid of the Church Lads' Brigade at the Parish Hall, St. Paul's, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, last night. Seated (left to right) are: Lieut. C. G. Stock, Lieut. T. W. Roland, Major W. Birch, Colonel A. M. Downing and Capt. Colley.

Evening Despatch 7th March 1939

FAMOUS HEATHANS

Sir Robert Howson Pickard

Pickard FRS (27 September 1874 – 18 October 1949) was a chemist who did pioneering work in chemistry and also for the cotton industry. He was also involved in educational administration and was Vice Chancellor of the University of London from 1937-1939. He was of Battersea Polytechnic (which later became the University of Surrey) from 1920 to 1927.



He was born in Balsall Heath, the son of Joseph Henry Pickard, a tool maker, and Alice (nee Howson). The family can be found living at 361 Moseley Road on the 1881 census – between the junctions with Belgrave Street and Sherbourne Road. From 1883-1891 he attended King Edward VI's Grammar School. In 1891 he studied chemistry at Mason Science College (which later became the University of Birmingham), and obtained a first class BSc. From there his career took off and he was eventually knighted for his services.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday 15th December 7:30

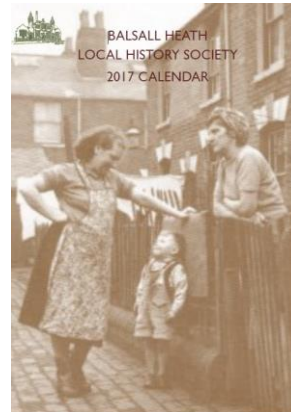
The Venture

(Malvern Street by the farm)

Pantomime:- A real family show

by Neil Roberts

A look at this British seasonal institution from the early harlequinade, to the big budget extravaganzas. Neil is also a practising magician in his own right!



2017 CALENDAR

The calendar is still available. Just £4 for a deluxe edition on thick card, and featuring 12 wonderful views of Balsall Heath.

This is the ideal gift for someone, or even yourself!

BALSALL HEATH AT WAR

A BALSALL HEATH HERO.

Lance - Corporal George Bird, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, only son of the late George and Alice Bird, of Balsall Heath, is officially reported killed in action of 2 July, 1917, in France, at the age of 34 years.



L-CORPL. G. BIRD.

He joined the Army in September, 1914, and was sent to France in May, 1915. He was badly gassed on Whit - Monday, 1915, and in December, 1915, was suffering from frozen hands and feet. During April, 1916, he received two minor wounds, and in September last was again wounded and suffered from gas poisoning, returning to the front early this year.

Lance-Corporal Bird was a scholar at Vincent-street and Sherborne-road Schools, and when last home wounded said a few words to the school children.

He resided at Clifton-road, Balsall Heath, and previous to the war was employed by Messrs. Jenkins, George-street. He leaves a widow and child.

Evening Despatch 27th July 1917

BALSALL HEATH CHURCH'S LOSS.

Since the news of the death in action of the Rev. B. W. King, a private in the K.R.R., assistant priest of St. Patrick's, Balsall Heath, the congregation have heard of the death from pneumonia of Gunner Percy Walsh, one of the thurifers of the church. Walsh leaves a widow and two young children. A solemn requiem for the repose of his soul is to be held at the church.

Evening Despatch 27th November 1918