



Balsall Heath Local History Society Annual Report 2018-2019



Bringing history to life

The Society was founded about 40 years ago with the aim of promoting interest in our local history. Over the years the Society has achieved considerable success, working with schools and community groups, organising exhibitions and events, collecting resources and producing its own publications. It is important we all feel pride in our area and to value its strengths, both past and present. Local history has a key role to play in underpinning community cohesion.

"The Lost Children"

This year has also seen the development of a new project on the Middlemore Children's Emigration Homes, "The Lost Children", funded by the Heritage Lottery. The Homes took over 6000 children from Birmingham to Canada between 1873 & 1948, to be placed with farmers in the backwoods until 1932 and later than that to Fairbridge Farm School.



We launched the project at the Back to Backs last August and followed this with a public event in September, with Balsall Heath Youth Theatre performing in New Street Station and outside St Martin's. This was followed by a talk by Patricia Skidmore, from Canada, daughter of a Middlemore migrant.

The aims of the project are to raise awareness of the work of the Homes, compile some case studies and make contact with relatives/ descendants living in England. There will be an exhibition at the Birmingham and Midland Institute in September 2019 together with talks and a Dramatic Lecture.

Enquiries and The Gazette Newsletter

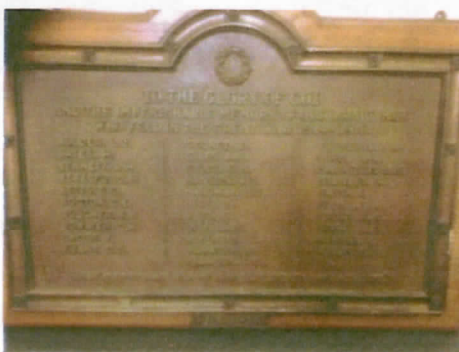
Research queries are steady and are usually connected to family history. The Gazette continues to be widely circulated. It is available via our website and email.

Goodbye to the Schoolroom

The Schoolroom in the old Clifton Junior School sadly closed in July 2017 as St Paul's Trust decided the building was no longer safe to use. It moved to Price's Square, Northfield where it looked excellent but in July we had notice to quit. We assessed our options carefully but decided it was time to say goodbye. Almost all the equipment was sold.

Lost & Found!

Lost: In September last year the original building which in the 1980s, was part of the Emigration Homes in St Luke's Road, was demolished as, indeed, was St Luke's Church.



Found: A WW1 War memorial from the Moseley Road Congregational Church (no longer there) was found in a skip in Wylde Green. We helped to find its origin.

Also found: a lovely collection of photos taken by Nick Bigg in the 1980s, donated by his sister, following his death in 2018.

Chairman's Report

The Society continued to have guest speakers who dealt with wide and fascinating subjects including Ruth Lowe, staggering us with samples of clothes from her extensive collection designed by Mary Quant whilst at the same time giving us details of her life; Richard Churchley stating that "The Poor are always with us"; Gina Maddison, the girl from Guildford Street, growing up in working class Birmingham in the late 1960's.

Not all meetings have gone according to plan however. Richard Churchley had to cancel an earlier date because of an accident with a hedge cutter (thankfully not too serious) and we had to rearrange Gina Maddison's date because of inclement weather. I would like to commend our Speakers' Secretary, Bron Salway, for dealing with these problems and for continuing to find these excellent guests.

Not all monthly meetings took place at the Venture. In August we were given an enjoyable tour, after hours, of the Walsall Leather Museum.

I would like to thank members of the Committee notably Val Hart, Diane Stead, Margaret Pendry and Pat Johnson for their help in setting up the monthly meetings particularly in taking admission money and supplying refreshments and our Vice-Chair, Jenny Lloyd, for filling in for me most admirably when I was unable to attend.

Finally I must thank you, the members, for attending the monthly meetings and hope that you will continue to do so.

Patrick Baird

Events

The year has again featured a lot of events at which we have run stalls:

June 3rd. Birmingham Lives Local History Fair.

June 23rd Moseley Street Fair

July 6th. Balsall Heath Carnival where the Society ran a tea tent.

August 11th Car Boot Sale at Kings Heath

NEW PUBLICATION

Sweet Memories

Our latest publication, "Sweet Memories, A Dictionary of Confectionery" appeared in June. What a treat! We are delighted to report that it is selling well.



Moving to the heart of Balsall Heath



Our last move of this financial year was in November. We had an office at St Paul's Trust for more than 30 years but were given notice as St Paul's told us it required the space. We are now based in The Old Print Works, in the eighteenth century house which fronts on to the Moseley Road. Our new office is lovely and we are very happy to be part of the thriving community there. We have taken with us our indexed collection of photographs, Directories, maps, resources, local books and a selected range of artefacts for use with schools and groups

meetings and trips

Meetings are held on the last Thursday of every month at 7.00 for 7.30 at St. Paul's Venture, Malvern St, off Clifton Road, Balsall Heath. All are welcome to come along. For details please phone

Partnerships & Funders

Thanks to those who work in partnership with us: Birmingham History Theatre Company, The Old Print Works, St. Paul's Community Development Trust, Balsall Heath Library.

We have also contributed to other local projects with: Women & Theatre (Out of the Water), MAT (Midland Actors Group), Neighbourhood News Online.

Thanks to our funders, too who enable our work. This year we have had grants from:



Charity Registration Number: 1101945



Committee Members 2018-2019

President: Richard Albutt

Chair: Patrick Baird

Vice-Chair: Jenny Lloyd

Treasurer: Pat Johnson

Programme Secretary: Bron Salway

Committee Secretary: Val Hart.

Committee Members: Margaret Pendry, Diane Stead, Jim Fitzpatrick

Contact Information

Balsall Heath Local History Society.

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www.balsallheathhistory.co.uk

We can also be found on Facebook and Twitter

Publications by Balsall Heath Local History Society

Sweet Memories A dictionary of confectionery from times gone by.

Balsall Heath Through Time by Val Hart. Images of Balsall Heath from Victorian times to the present day.

The Flicks Memories of the cinemas in Balsall Heath.

The Moseley Road Trail The Development of the Moseley Road from the 1740s.

Brown Paper and Goose Grease A Dictionary of Traditional Remedies.

Balsall Heath, A History by Val Hart.

Our development from the heath of the 18th century to the suburbs of the 1940s.

Balsall Heath & Highgate Past & Present Edited by Val Hart and Alan Hemming Photographs of the area by topic.

Tales Out Of School Edited by Val Hart.

Memories of schooldays by adults from Balsall Heath and beyond, spanning more than a century and five continents.

The Gazette Our monthly newsletter. Stories and photographs from the past and present.