



Balsall Heath Local History Society

THE GAZETTE

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Lost Children on the internet and exhibition

We now have a Facebook page. Do visit it for News , images and stories.

The link is:

<https://www.facebook.com/lostchildrenproject/>



Between 14th and 21st September we will have an exhibition of material from the lost children project at the Birmingham Midland Institute on Margaret street in the city centre. As

bookends to this exhibition there will be a dramatic lecture followed by a talk by Dr. Patricia Roberts-Pichette on the 14th and Patricia Skidmore will give a talk on her experience on the 21st.

Runcorn Road.

On 13th April this year the Friends of Brandwood Cemetery laid a wreath to mark the 120th Anniversary of its opening in 1899. The first burial was recorded on April 15th and was a 5 day old child from Runcorn Road, Balsall Heath, who had died of Diphtheria.

I was surprised to find a reference to Runcorn Road in 1899. The road was originally called John Street and ran as far as the railway line. Beyond that, there were fields stretching to Ladypool Lane and this is where races were held for tradesmen's horses. There was also later a small stub of a road leading off Ladypool Lane and called Avery Road.

The site of Runcorn Road was owned by John Jones in 1840 and it was about this time that the first part of

the road was laid out. The big disruption in the area was the coming of the railway. Both Samuel Rawlins and Humphrey Pountney, of Monyhull Hall, took the Midland & Gloucester Railway Company to court in 1837 claiming compensation and protesting that "an embankment of this kind will be a serious injury for its unseemliness and its shading of the land". However, they did not receive as much as they hoped. Rawlins claimed £2980 but was awarded £802. Pountney claimed £3027 but was awarded ££752.

Rawlin's land was later developed as Clifton Road about 1854 by the Birmingham Freehold Land Society. Pountney's land was the site of Brighton Road not developed till 1872, again by the Freehold Land Society. John Jones' land lay between these two and obviously he had originally planned on a road as far as Ladypool Lane but instead he sold it to the Railway Company who are shown as owners in the 1840 Tithe Map.

The railway opened in December 1840 with a station near the present Highgate Road traffic lights. Brighton Rd Station opened in 1875 and presumably the siting of the station was decided by the fact that the Railway already owned the land. By 1888 John Street had become St John's Road and then in 1903 the Runcorn Road Estate Syndicate developed the road with houses designed by an architect called Francis B. Andrews. He planned the