



## Balsall Heath Local History Society

## THE GAZETTE

FEBRUARY 2020

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### The Lost Children Project

At the end of February our Heritage Lottery funding comes to an end but this is far from the end of our involvement with the story. The project has been an outstanding success in every way. Over 1000 people visited our exhibitions, over 150 families have contacted us with their stories and more than 50 volunteers have given their time and energy. We are all sad to say goodbye to our Project Officer, Rowena, who has been utterly amazing.

The Middlemore Archives are rich in detailed records of children's lives but the relative's stories have given us a wonderful insight into the impact on whole families on both sides of the Atlantic. Many of the children who were sent to Canada left behind siblings in Birmingham and in some cases it is only now that reconnections are being made.

"The Lost Children", the book which we are publishing, will be available shortly.

Meanwhile we are setting up a Middlemore Group for any relatives and volunteers who wish to stay involved, and we will be continuing in our searches in the archives.



In 2022 Birmingham will be hosting the Commonwealth Games and we are delighted to announce that the Civic Society has authorised a blue

plaque for St Luke's Road, on the site of the original Homes building in Highgate. The builders, Barratts, who have developed the site, officially opened their B5 Central scheme last week and invited us to attend. They are giving full support to the Plaque and are even going to plant some Maple Trees.

### In Production

The Final Curtain Call, a new murder mystery play set in February 1914, is coming soon -March 27th and April 3rd at 7.30 at The Red Lion in Kings Heath.

A production by The Birmingham History Theatre Company.

### Help! Your photos please!

Following the success of our Street Trail around Edward Rd, we are trying to find photos of Mary Street from the 1950s onwards for the Sikh Gurdwara. Their building is on the corner of Mary St and Hallam St. The trail, if you missed it, is on our website, with more detailed information than we could provide in the leaflet. Thanks.

### Renewal at St. Alban's

St Alban's Parochial Church Council, has received a grant of £222,000 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. This grant will help the Church Council to: Protect the

building by renewing the roof, repairing walls and windows, and providing step-free access for wheelchair users.

This will let them have more public open days, guided tours, concerts and recitals and generally open up to a much wider audience. They also plan to train more volunteers for their open days. The work will start next month.

Fr Gerry Sykes, vicar of St Alban's Church, said "We are excited to have received support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. This will not only secure the future of a spectacular Victorian Church, it will also allow us to make the history of our area, including the radical social



action of church and chapel, known to today's diverse local community and especially the youth of Highgate."

## Other Events

March 4<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m

The Newcomen Society

The key to unlocking the secret of the early Newcomen steam engine: Suhail Rana discusses his research on this engineer and surveyor

ThinkTank, Curzon Street  
B4 7XG

March 18<sup>th</sup> 7:15 p.m.

Kings Heath Local History Society

The University of Birmingham and Erdington Orphanage. Some of the works of Josiah Mason and Joseph Chamberlain. By Bob Blackham.

Heathfield Road community centre, Kings Heath

£3 admission for non-members

April 1<sup>st</sup> 7:00 p.m.

The Newcomen Society

History of Women in Engineering

Professor Graeme Gooday explores the ongoing role of women in engineering and related sectors

ThinkTank, Curzon Street  
B4 7XG

On 4<sup>th</sup> April and the first Saturday of every month up to October there will be an Heritage walk through the Jewellery Quarter run by the Museum of the Jewellery quarter. Tickets cost £8 and can be booked online or by phone at 0121 348 8263.

## Next meeting.

**Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup>**

The speaker will be Gina Maddison with something entitled "Every Picture Tells a Story"

7 p.m for a 7.30 start.

St Paul's Venture, Malvern St.

Visitors are welcome. There is a fee of £3 for the evening for non members or £1 for members.

Membership of the Society costs £10 a year.

Tea and coffee are provided at the beginning of the evening at no extra charge.