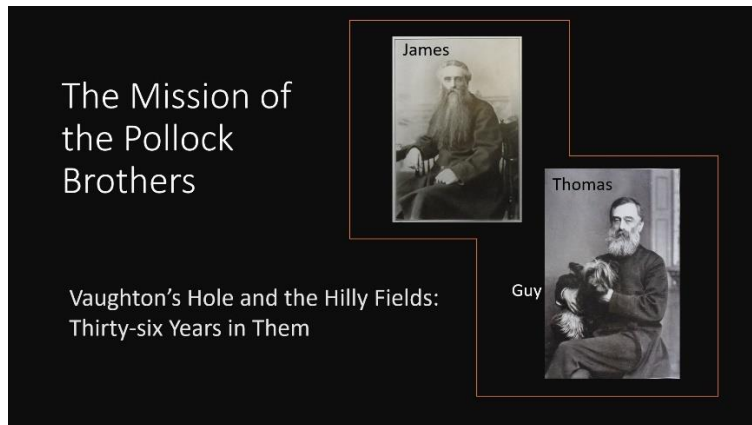


Next Meeting

Visit to St Alban's Church for a talk given by Church Warden Christopher Smith, followed by a short tour of the Church. 7 pm Thursday 29th July 2021



Chris tells us the title of his talk is: "The Mission of the Pollock Brothers", with a Subtitle: "Vaughton's Hole and the Hilly Fields: Thirty-six years in Them"



"Why did James and Thomas Pollock, brother priests of private means, choose to devote their whole lives to a religious and educational mission to the people in a high-density slum housing in a new industrial suburb of Birmingham where there were no schools, churches or chapels, little sanitation and much disease? Born in the Isle of Man to Irish parents, the brothers were inspired by the Oxford Movement, a revival of Catholic tradition within the Church of England.

Beauty in decoration, vestments, flowers and music were allied to dignity and reverence in the administration of the sacraments. The Church, and all that went on in it, provided a dramatic contrast to pinched and ugly home surroundings. Combined with inspired preaching and teaching, it won hearts and minds by appeal to the senses as well as to reason. But this revival of Catholic teaching and practice provoked lasting, sometimes violent, opposition from the Birmingham Protestant Association and their allies. The mission survived and prospered, growing from space for 250 in Mission Chapel of St Alban in 1865 to space for 2,400 in four churches of St Alban, St Patrick, St Columba, and St Katharine with church schools of St Alban and St Patrick at the death of Thomas, the last of the brothers, in 1896. Today the Church of St Alban the Martyr and ARC St Alban's Academy are the legacy of their mission."

Balsall Heath Local History Society Gazette

JUNE 2021



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Membership of the Society costs £10 annually and can be bought via the Donate button on the Society website. Thank you to all who have chosen to subscribe this year in spite of the lack of meetings. We hope to hold our AGM later in the year when circumstances permit.

Next meeting.

St Alban's church, Stanhope
Street Highgate B12 0PX
Thursday 29th June 7 pm. (see
left)

June Meeting

Following the government's decision to delay easing COVID restrictions, it was decided to cancel the trip to the West Midlands Transport Museum announced in last month's gazette. All 26 of those who booked a place were told of the cancellation in time. We were happy to have such a take-up and look forward to announcing a new date shortly.

Volunteers requested for the Dyche Collection of photographs



Sampad are seeking VOLUNTEERS to help create an exhibition for schools entitled FROM CITY OF EMPIRE TO CITY OF DIVERSITY: A VISUAL JOURNEY. The project is a partnership between Sampad, Birmingham Archives and Birmingham University celebrating Birmingham's Commonwealth heritage to coincide with the Commonwealth Games in 2022. The project explores the experiences and legacies of post war migrants and settlers from the

Caribbean, Africa, the Indian sub-continent and Ireland. What can we learn from them? What is the real story of Commonwealth migration to our city, and how should we tell it?

The exhibition will be created from rarely seen photographs in Birmingham Archive, including The Dyche Collection. In the collection are c10,000 photographs of people including portrait shots and special occasions. Many of the people are first or second generation settlers making a new home in our city. In October 2021, we are launching a new exhibition for schools to help children understand and own their local history and heritage.

Sampad are recruiting :-

1. **5** people to work with our learning manager, Rachel, helping her to **research life in Birmingham for Commonwealth migrants**. In this role, you will have *training in research skills and using family history resources*.
2. **5** people to work at the Library of Birmingham with our community archivist, Sophie, helping her to **conserve, organise and make accessible The Dyche Collection**. In this role you will have *training in listing, describing and contextualising archive materials*.
3. **6** people to work with our learning manager Rachel, helping her to **develop and deliver History talks** for care homes. *In this role, you will have training in communication and engaging an audience.*

Volunteers will each work for 20 hours, time negotiated.

Applicants should be over 18, have good ICT skills, be committed and punctual, independent and happy to travel to different locations to carry out the work

If you wish to apply email a CV and covering letter explaining why you would like to volunteer and why you think you would be a good candidate and **which volunteer role you are interested in** to rachel @sampad.org.uk by **July 26th 2021**. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ring on 0121 446 3266

The world in one place

Learning together in a multicultural city.

An exhibition about primary school life in Birmingham in the 1960s- 1980s. is to take place at the Old Print Works from Saturday 26th June until Sunday 4th July between noon and 4p.m. on Sundays and 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. all other days. You are asked to "Share your memories - If you have books or other items from the period that connect to school life - or just your memories - please bring them along to share with us" .

"Let Us Play" outdoor exhibition

Balsall Heath City Farm, Malvern St.

For the last two years General Public have been delving into the secret history of Birmingham's adventure playground movement. This has involved the collection and collation of exciting new archive material to capture the Birmingham play movement from the 1960s to the present day.

The exhibition at the farm is where the old adventure playground used to be. It will run from Friday 25th June - Sunday 25th July and is installed on the fence around the farm so it's viewable 24/7.

Here's a link to it on the Flatpack Festival website -

https://flatpackfestival.org.uk/event/let-us-play-outdoor-exhibition?perf_no=1662

The Lost Children

Enquiries

During lockdown we have had a lot of enquiries from relatives of child migrants and we are intending to offer a research service for them when possible.

The Wolfson Room at the Library of Birmingham is now offering limited appointments from July, but there is likely to be a lot of demand for them so it may all take some time.

Talks on the Middlesmore Homes and The Lost Children

I had a number of bookings for talks which had to be cancelled because of the lockdown. I am now taking bookings again for the autumn. The fee is £50 and this is donated to the Balsall Heath Local History Society.

The Book

Sales and distribution of The Lost Children book were also affected by lockdown as it arrived from the printers in the middle of March last year. It has nevertheless been selling well online and is available via our Society website.

Val Hart

This book uncovers the history of one of Birmingham's best kept secrets.

The Middlesmore Emigration Homes emigrated over 5,000 children from Birmingham, chiefly to Canada, between 1873 and 1948, as part of a wider movement which saw over 130,000 UK children sent to the colonies.

The Middlesmore children provided much needed manual labour on farms in the remote backwoods of Canada and their fortunes varied enormously.

This book features previously unpublished stories, letters and photographs of some of the child migrants. Most children left behind families and siblings in Birmingham and this book includes extraordinary tales of families reconnecting across the Atlantic.



email
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Please visit our websites
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www.thelostchildren.uk

Facebook
Balsall Heath Local History Society
The Lost Children Project

The Lost Children was a Heritage Lottery project by Balsall Heath Local History Society. The funding finished in 2020 but the work is continuing.



In recent times, we have covered a number of personal stories of lives lived in Balsall Heath. This work has brought some wonderful photos which we have used to illustrate them. Editorial space has meant we have not shown all that we could. Here, we present some of those for the first time as they are of such social and communal significance in our local history.

Chinn MBE.

Two photographs of Ombersley Rd B12, by kind permission of Carl



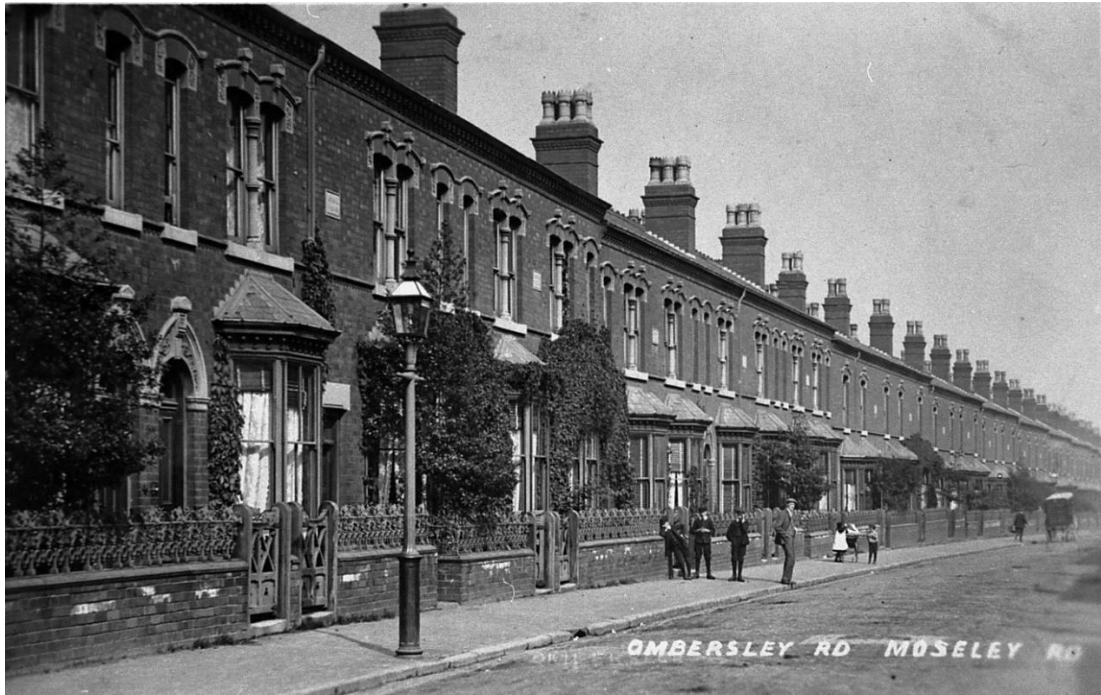
In May's Gazette 'Babs's Balsall Heath', told of Dorothy K Parsonage's (nee Barry) connections to Balsall Heath, in particular of her time in Ombersley Rd. This photo was taken near the railway bridge and near the Junction with Woodfield Rd. Babs recalls The Church like building (centre – on corner of the junction), "Was more Chapel than Church and I was dragged every week into

Sunday School there." Photo Credit Carl Chinn.



Personal note from your writer. In July '57 I arrived at this very spot armed with a note from 'Youth Employment' to visit the factory (right of centre) to obtain my first job. The company was Charles W Brecknell Ltd, Weighing Scale manufactures. I thought the windows were a bit too dirty, and did not go in. Youth Employment tore a strip off me for that. I went to the next place that they sent me and stayed for 29 years!

Credit; Grace's Guide (Industrial History)



In this wonderful photo of Ombersley, houses can be seen to have front gardens, however small! Babs remembers them as “the POSH houses”. Photo Credit Carl Chinn



Deserving to be listed under the title ‘Ghosts Streets of Balsall Heath`, is this magnificent arched doorway of St Paul’s Church. Its May 20th, 1950, Babs has married Ben. Photo Credit Dorothy (Babs) Parsonage and Lisa Fair.

The Church was to be demolished during the 1970's "In its time it was extremely fashionable, (- - -) However, by the 1970s it was difficult to make best use of the inflexible space inside and costly to maintain." - page 22, 'Balsall Heath Through Time' by Val Hart.



This is Jon Roger Rollason, born in April 1931 at Acacia Terrace, Clifton Rd, in the same week as Dennis John Jukes was born. Dennis was the life story subject of the February edition of the Gazette. The two grew up together and were firm friends during the 1930s and 40s. Jon sent this photo of himself to Dennis while serving his National Service.

We did not use this photo previously but do so here for its own value and for the generation it represents. With inherited values and respect for others with notions of duty to God, Queen, and Country.

Jon was to do alright for himself and was successful as an actor and writer for television, working on series such as Dr Who and the Avengers.

Photo Credit Warren Jukes and family.

Researching Dennis's story shed light on his education at Dennis Rd School (now Anderton Park Primary), and it was delightful work. We had used two wonderful photos of classrooms with lessons in process in Dennis's story. Here we have two examples of lessons but with a difference.





The pupils are dressed for role play. They are learning about other countries and their people by way of their national costumes. Comparing India with Canada, and Ireland with Scotland. It would seem that Dennis Road school was a fine place to get an education. JF.

The Balsall Heath Local History Society is Registered Charity No. 1101945
The Old Print Works, 498-506 Moseley Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham B12 9AH