

West Midland Transport Museum:

We have a list of around 20 people signed up for this visit.

Thursday 19th August 12 noon start. Tea and Coffee on arrival – A talk followed by guided tour. Then take time to look around with a 4/4.30 finish. Entry fee £6.00 per person.

Covid, though not compulsory feel free to wear a mask should you desire.



Your tour guides waiting to welcome you

WMT Museum Chapel Lane Wythall B47 6JX

Book Review. "All Alone Again" by Carolyn MacIsaac



58-60 St Martin's Street.

The

story of Joe Payne, a Middlemore Homes child emigrant .1905-1987

Joe was one of thousands of children taken to Canada by the Middlemore Homes in Highgate. He was born in 1905 in the Cotswolds but when his father joined the army in 1914, his mother moved to the poorest part of Birmingham in search of work.

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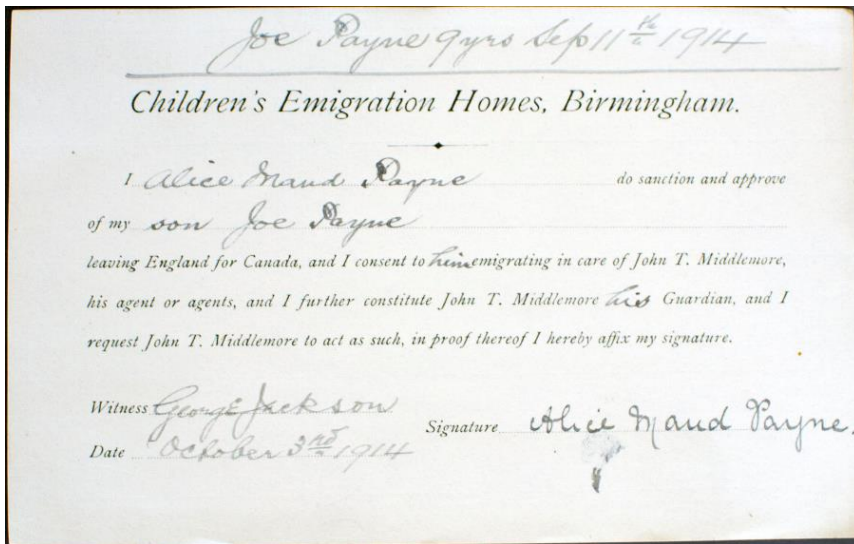
Membership of the Society costs £10 annually and can be bought via the Donate button on the Society website. Thank you to all who have chosen to subscribe this year in spite of the lack of meetings. We hope to hold our AGM later in the year when circumstances permit.

Next meeting.

West Midland Transport
Museum, Thursday 19th August,
12 noon (see left)

By September of that year she was in desperate straits and also needing an operation so she

took the heart rending decision to send Joe to the Homes. He believed this was temporary but actually his mother signed the consent form for him to be emigrated to Canada. He left in May, 1915.



In June he travelled to Cape Breton Island , Nova Scotia and the Macinnis family. They had applied for an older boy and were dismayed to find Joe was only 9 and rather small. Mrs Macinnis was a widow with a 20 year old son and 5

younger daughters. She only spoke Gaelic so it was fortunate that her children were bi-lingual. He stayed there until he was 18, in 1923.



Joe is on the far left in this photo.

Carolyn MacIsaac is Joe's daughter and she drew on his memories, as well as her own, to chart his journey though life with compassion and sensitivity. I thoroughly recommend this book which illuminates the emigration story.

Val Hart



A fascinating feature of Joe's life was that contact was maintained with his mother and younger sister back in Birmingham with a wonderful stream of cards & postcards in both directions over the years. In his 50s he spent his life savings to come back to England to be reunited with his mother and sister. He stayed a month but it was difficult. They felt like strangers.



Balsall Heath's Boundaries.

There are proposals from the Boundary Commission for changes to Constituency Boundaries, including Hall Green Constituency which currently covers all of Balsall Heath.

Under the proposals, the ward of Balsall Heath East and Sparkbrook (East of the railway line) will remain in Hall Green Constituency, and Balsall Heath West ward (West of the railway line covering Moseley Road down will be incorporated into Ladywood ward.

I am appalled at these proposals which will split our community in half. Balsall Heath has a proud history of community cohesion. From 1862 to 1890 the area had its own governing body, the Balsall Heath Board of Health, until we were annexed by Birmingham.

In more recent times Balsall Heath has shown itself to be a united and strong community, hosting annual carnivals and with a robust record of neighbourhood partnerships. It currently has an online newspaper, Neighbourhood News, which is well supported. Balsall Heath was also the first urban area to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, approved by a referendum in 2015, and there has been work on proposals for a Town Square, in fulfilment of one of the aims of the plan.

Now it seems that the declared wishes of the community are being totally ignored by boundary planners. Surely it would be in everyone's best interest to support this diverse community which has struggled against the odds to enjoy a sense of pride in its identity?

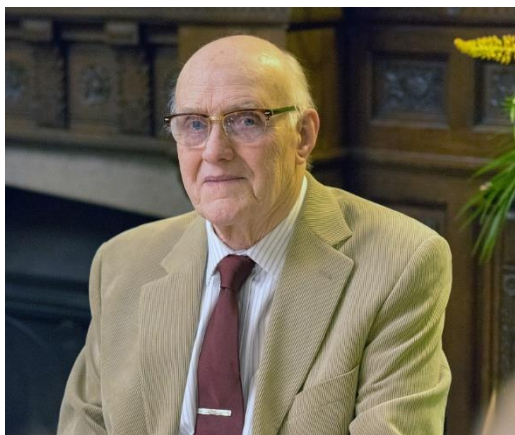
The proposals can be found here: <https://www.bcereviews.org.uk/node/6490>. You have until 2nd August 2021 to share your views online.

Val Hart

It is worth noting that the vast majority of the voters (those living west of Pershore Road) in the district called West Balsall Heath have only been called Balsall Heath for one council election. If there is another parliamentary election before the changes they will vote for an Edgbaston MP. They will have different issues to confront since the review suggests they are moved to Ladywood. I do not know if they will consider Hall Green a better option.

William McCabe

In memoriam



In memoriam: Dennis John Jukes, who died recently. It is with some sadness that we report Dennis's death. In February's Gazette we carried a summary of Dennis's life in connection to Balsall Heath. The research undertaken alongside his family told us a lot about him and Balsall Heath making one of the most interesting and lively articles ever.

His son Warren, told us, "Sadly Dad lost his fight against stomach cancer on the 21st of July. His health deteriorated rapidly in only a couple of weeks. He died peacefully at home with my brothers and mom around him" Warren reflected on his dad's life saying "We are so proud of dad,

what he achieved from humble beginnings in Balsall Heath, learning a trade to better himself, which led to meeting my mother. And for being an amazing father and teaching us to be kind to everybody. He will be greatly missed by family and friends

Sandbrooks Hardware Shop



It's the summer of 1981 the carnival parade is in full flow along the Moseley Road. These two unique photos give us an idea of the atmosphere created by the carnival at the time. The first, with a giant union jack leading the way, is from the history society's collection and it is a photo that may well have been seen by many over the years since it was first taken. In the upper centre we can see



the junction with Homer St, and one of its longest established shops on the Moseley Road. The Ironmongery store, Sandbrooks, advertises its wares. Tools, Locks, Glass Cut, Pots & Pans (see detail).

Detail, Ironmongery shop on the corner of Homer St and Moseley Road No 545.

Our second photo of the carnival is a rare find and



seen by few until now. It is a view from inside Sandbrooks as the parade passes. On the pavement outside a garden rake is on display along with 8 feet long bamboo canes priced at 18 pence each.

We have researched the history of this shop, interviewing the two owners it's had since March 1973 up to the present day. They have a fascinating story to tell. That research is

still on going and so here is a pictorial view showing how the shop and the buildings around it has changed over time.



Two views of the opposite corner of Homer Street. In the first, its 1970's or early 80's. Dixon's paint and wallpaper 'Suppliers to the Trade' occupied the building. We see a man carrying two large tins of paint away. In the second, its present day (July 2021), and the old building has gone. In its place Kwik Fit, Tyres and Exhausts.

The original name of our ironmongery / hardware shop was Sandbrook and located on the north corner of Homer St. We leave this story for now with photos of the shop in two different places. A

fact which came as a complete surprise to us during our research.



What we found was that the Ironmongery shop Sandbrooks had been located on the other side of Moseley Rd at No 548 on the south corner of Runcorn Rd by 1935 or sooner. The Homer Rd location at No 545 was established certainly by 1965.

There is quite a story to be told regarding the shop and the people who ran it.

JF



The Balsall Heath Local History Society is Registered Charity No. 1101945

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