

The Commonwealth Games & The Lost Children Project



2022 marks the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Children's Emigration Homes in Highgate, founded by John Middlemore. Between the years 1873 and 1954 they emigrated over 5000 children chiefly to Canada but also to Australia.

Over 100,000 children were emigrated in total by many different agencies.

However, there are also many relatives and descendants living here in the Birmingham area.

We are celebrating this extraordinary Commonwealth link with a programme of events, with Games related funding and support from Barratts the builders.

1. July. Launch of a Blue Plaque at St Luke's Rd, Highgate, where the Homers were established.

2. June to October. A Touring Exhibition on pop up banners finishing at the Back To Backs where it will stay until October.

3. A new play "The Lost Children" to be performed on: Friday evening, July 8th & Sunday afternoon July 10th at the Hexagon Theatre in the MAC, Cannon Hill.

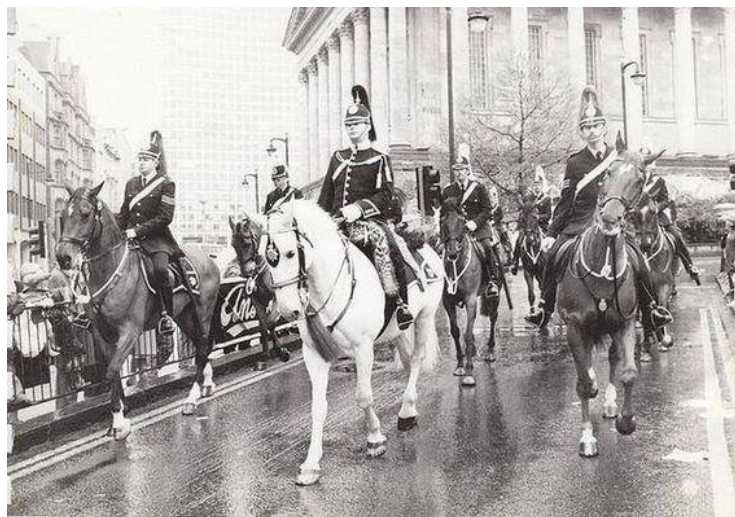
Friday evening, July 29th & Saturday evening, July 30th at the Blue Orange Theatre in the Jewellery Quarter as part of BirminghamFest

Do please save the dates! Come and support us!

Val Hart

Museum reopens

The Police Museum on Steelhouse Lane has now re-opened. It is open from 10 am to 4 pm on every day except Monday. There is such a lot to see that they recommend taking 3 hours for a visit. They are, however, charging £9 a ticket for adults, £5.50 for children and £7.65 for other concessions. For more details, to book tickets and explore some of the history of policing in Birmingham and beyond see <https://museum.west-midlands.police.uk/>



Balsall Heath Local History Society Gazette

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Membership of the Society costs £12 a year. Membership runs from January to December each year and application forms are available on the website. Fees at meetings will continue unchanged: £1 for members and £3 for visitors. Meetings are held at St Paul's Venture, Malvern Street at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served from 7 pm to 7:20 p.m.

Coming soon

Thursday April 28th. "Four men from Birmingham Sports Clubs who died in WW1." presented by Doug Smith..
Thursday May 26th The speaker will be Les Williams on Forgotten Brummies. William Hutton, Thomas Attwood & Joseph Sturge

Another Moment



The caption with this photo says 'Birmingham Corporation Tram at The Moseley Road 1941'. And that is what it is. But it is a photo of so much more too. We can easily place where on the Moseley Road it is. And confirm the year of 1941. We are outside 'The Imperial' Cinema, opened in 1914 and came to be noted for its "select and high class audience" (1).

I didn't know that when I went to the minors matinee's in the 1950's.

The year is confirmed by the advertised MGM film, *Gallant Sons*, released November 1940, starring Jackie Cooper, directed by George B Seita. Given the times the photo was taken in, this is a quiet and happy scene – note the boys on the upper deck looking down at the cameraman smiling and giving the thumbs up. Yet was when Moseley Road was earning the nick name of 'bomb alley' in WWII. Talk about "Keep calm and carry-on".

The building is no longer there, having been demolished in the early part of this century. Neither is the Congregational Church whose magnificent, pointed towers can be seen in the upper right of the picture. The church stood on the north corner of Runcorn Road, and further right still on the other corner of Runcorn, is the Ironmongery stores of Sandbrook's featured in the February '22 edition of the *Gazette*. This too

has gone, demolished in the early 1960s. Oh yes, there is more in this photograph than a corporation Tram on the Moseley Road. And let us not start on about the three prominent advertisements the tram itself carries. JF

Note (1) A quote from 'the Flicks' a booklet by Balsall Heath Local History (Available)





The Moseley Road Baths Gets a Face Lift

What's going on here then? These photos were taken mid-April 2022.

The answer lies in this story from the Birmingham Mail

www.birminghamlive.co.uk FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2022

£657,000 work starts on old swimming baths

April 1st, 2022

News Reporter Kirsty Bosley tells us that the Moseley Road Baths is getting a face lift. And doesn't it deserve it.

A building many of us Balsall

Heathans have cherished memory of is about to look the part of being the world heritage site that it is. One of only six Grade II Listed swimming baths currently operating in the UK.

It is one of the oldest and the only one outside of London that is still open for swimming to the general public.

Upgrades will happen for the façade to protect the brickwork and decorative terracotta elements including the City of Birmingham coat of arms above the women's entrance. And much more to the rooms inside

From being a site threatened with

KIRSTY BOSLEY
News Reporter

WORK has begun on transforming Moseley Road Baths and Balsall Heath Library.

Major building conservation work has started to preserve the historic buildings after £657,000 of funding was raised.

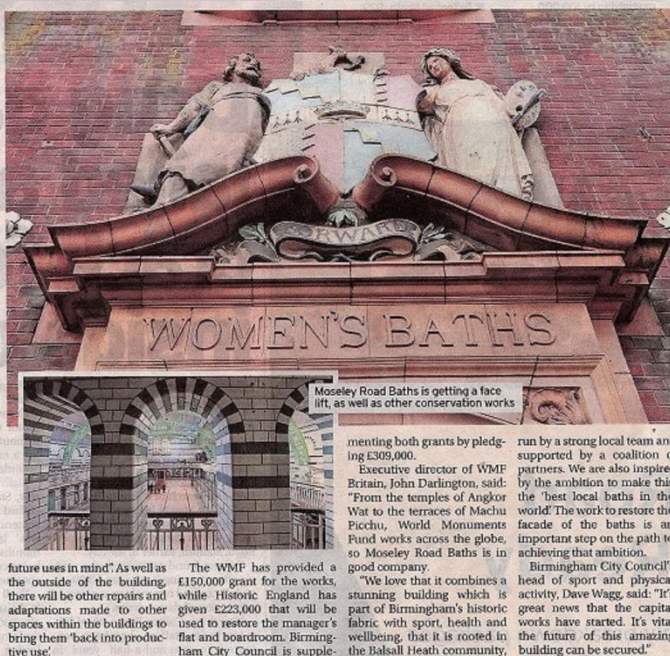
There are only six Grade II Listed swimming baths currently operating in the UK and Moseley Road Baths is one of the oldest. It's the only one outside of London that is still open for swimming to the general public.

The baths were included on the 2016 World Monuments Watch after they were threatened with closure. Other sites that the World Monuments Fund (WMF) looks out for are Machu Picchu in Peru and the temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

Among the upgrades are facade work to protect the brickwork and decorative terracotta elements that can be seen from the outside of the building, which has been open to the public for 115 years.

It includes a City of Birmingham coat of arms above the women's entrance which displays our city's motto, 'Forward'.

The Moseley Road Baths will remain open during the works. According to the WMF, the plan is to "unlock interior spaces throughout the Baths and Library, with potential



future uses in mind.' As well as the outside of the building, there will be other repairs and adaptations made to other spaces within the buildings to bring them 'back into productive use'.

The WMF has provided a £150,000 grant for the works, while Historic England has given £223,000 that will be used to restore the manager's flat and boardroom. Birmingham City Council is supple-

menting both grants by pledging £305,000. Executive director of WMF Britain, John Darlington, said: "From the temples of Angkor Wat to the terraces of Machu Picchu, World Monuments Fund works across the globe, so Moseley Road Baths is in good company. "We love that it combines a stunning building which is part of Birmingham's historic fabric with sport, health and wellbeing, that it is rooted in the Balsall Heath community,

run by a strong local team and supported by a coalition of partners. We are also inspired by the ambition to make this the 'best local baths in the world'. The work to restore the facade of the baths is an important step on the path to achieving that ambition." Birmingham City Council's head of sport and physical activity, Dave Wagg, said: "It's great news that the capital works have started. It's vital the future of this amazing building can be secured."

demolition to something for all of us to be truly proud of. JF

The BHLHS has visitors at the OPW



On the 29th of March we were pleased to meet with and help students with their tutor Dr Irina Kuznetsova, from the School of Geography, Earth, and Environmental Sciences University of Birmingham. They were interested to hear how Balsall Heath has been changed since it became so diverse, and how ethnic communities create such a unique atmosphere in the area.

They study place-making and a sense of belonging.

A second theme of interest was that of creative communities and accessibility of co-working spaces. Which is exactly what the Old Print works is about. A resident team member was able to help them with that.

Photo: Student study boards from 'Journey to Balsall Heath' project.

Reconstruction

For many years the block of Georgian semi-detached houses on the corner of Moseley Road and Highgate Road have been left to rot despite a grade II listed status. If you were to walk past now you would see boards around the site and large cranes beyond. This is not a sign that they are demolishing the old buildings. There is a plan to convert them into flats and build larger blocks behind them where there are now disused railway sheds and an old factory. For now you can find a virtual tour of the site as it is at

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1esGYL-9tLa1CYyPT22VaaHpe6BGA4Wd9/view>

Above is a shot from that 2 minute film. There are also visualisations of what they expect the finished buildings to look like. When everything is finished they expect to have 85 flats divided between the reconstructed houses (18 flats) and the new blocks which should look something like the brown building in the picture (67 flats).



Other Events

The Moseley Society presents a free Zoom talk by the Moseley History Group

Moseley and World War Two

by Ian Binnie, based on research by Edwina Rees and Peter Streets

Thursday 28th April at 7.30pm

Research into World War Two has often become second best to that on the Great War. The sacrifice of local people between 1939 and 1945 is just as significant. The commemorations of the 75th anniversary of VE and VJ Day were muted due to the pandemic. Ian will highlight the contribution of 12 local men who were killed serving with the armed forces, all of whom are remembered on Moseley memorials. He will also refer to the bombing raids which caused such damage in the local area.

If you would like to join the Zoom talk, please send an email to rkt16@btinternet.com and we will send you the zoom link. All you then need to do is to click on that link at the scheduled time.

City of Empire to City of Diversity

from 18 March to 18 June at the Library of Birmingham.

An exhibition of pictures and other material from various sources. This includes a history of the Dyche studios and a lot of photographs from that collection.

Includes an opportunity to meet the curators of the exhibition at 5:30 pm on 10th May.

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