



## Balsall Heath Local History Society



# Annual Report 2021-2022

### **Bringing history to life**

The Society was founded over 40 years ago with the aim of promoting interest in our local history. Over the years the Society has achieved considerable success, working with schools and community groups, organising exhibitions and events, collecting resources and producing our own publications. It is important we all feel pride in our area and to value its strengths, both past and present. Local history has a key role to play in underpinning community cohesion.

## Chairman's Report

At long last, following months of non-meetings because of Covid, we began meetings again from September 2021, entertained and educated by an array of interesting speakers on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from the history of Scouts and Brigades to the story of 1920's fashion and flappers. Some members even demonstrated their skill at dancing "The Charleston"!

Among the star "turns" were David and Pam Humphreys who visited twice, once in October, when we had a photographic and historical tour of The number 8 Inner Ring bus and in March when they did the same for "The Birmingham Hippodrome". Other topics included the story of four men from Birmingham sports clubs who were killed in World War 1, expertly told by Doug Smith.



I have to give my thanks to Bron Salway for continuing to find and book speakers, to Val Hart, Pat Johnson, Diane Stead and Margaret Pendrey for preparing the meeting room, taking money and providing refreshments. Last but certainly not least I wish to thank you, the members, for your continuing loyalty and support of the Society and hope for many more successful years ahead.

## The Lost Children Project

The Project aims to raise awareness of the work of the Middlemore Homes which emigrated over 5000 children from Birmingham, chiefly to Canada, between 1873 & 1954. The children were placed with farmers in the

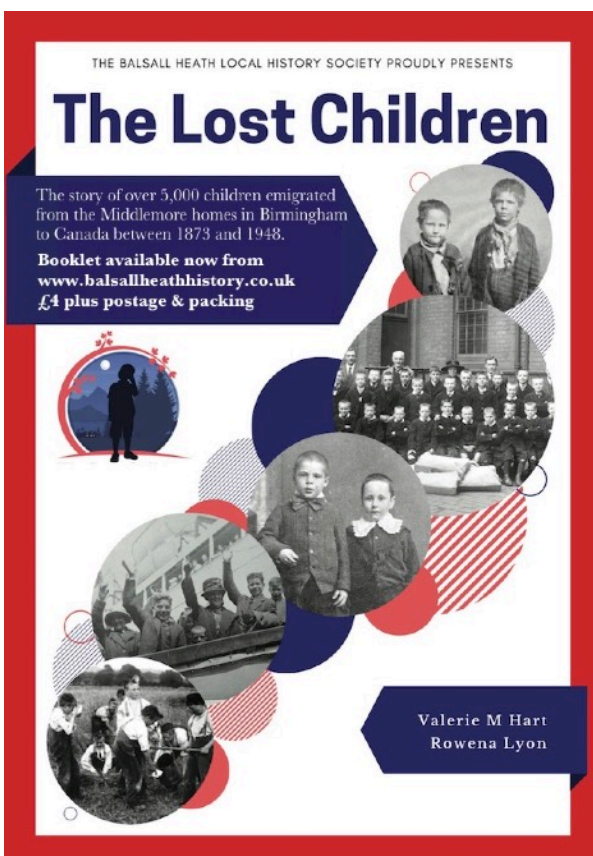
backwoods until 1932 and after that to Fairbridge Farm Schools.



This year we have been successful in gaining grants from the Commonwealth Games Celebrating Communities Fund for a new touring exhibition on pop-up roller banners. to be exhibited from June to October, 2022. A grant from the Midland Ancestors Kemp Legacy Fund also paid for some of the banners.

Plans for the Blue Plaque in St Luke's Road, Highgate were also finalised with a date set in July 2022 to tie in with the Commonwealth Games coming to Birmingham.

Meanwhile The book, "The Lost Children" has been selling well and enquiries from relatives have continued to flow in. We have been able to undertake some research for families, which has been very pleasing.



## Events and Trips

This year events have been restricted by the pandemic. However, we ran a stall at the Moseley Summer Fete which went well and we enjoyed two trips out.

The first was to St Alban's Church in Highgate, with a talk by Chris Smith; the second was to Wythall transport Museum.

We have also been awarded a grant from The Commonwealth Legacy Fund for a Heritage Trail, which will take place in September, 2022.



## Meetings

Meetings in normal times are held on the last Thursday of every month at 7.00 for 7.30 at St. Paul's Venture, Malvern St, off Clifton Road, Balsall Heath, B12 8NN. All are welcome to come along. The programme is on our website.

## Partnerships & Funders

Thanks to those who work in partnership with us:

- **Birmingham History Theatre Company,**
- **The Old Print Works**
- **St. Paul's Community Development Trust.**

## Research Enquiries

Research queries are steady and are usually connected to family history. We have good resources at our History Base; maps; some Birmingham Directories; a complete run of The Balsall Heath newspaper from 1973 to 2015; and an indexed photographic collection. These are all useful in answering enquiries.

## The Gazette Newsletter

The Gazette has flourished this year and expanded, as distribution by email has meant we could spread to more pages. It has a wide circulation and we get a lot of positive feedback. Thank you to all readers who help by responding to enquiries and thanks also to all those who have shared their Balsall Heath memories with us.

## Committee Members 2021-2022

President: Richard Albutt

Chair: Patrick Baird

Vice-Chair: Jenny Hodson

Treasurer: Pat Johnson

Programme Secretary: Bron Salway

Committee Secretary: Val Hart.

Committee Members: Jim Fitzpatrick, Judith Millington, Pauline Pedersen

## Contact Information

Balsall Heath Local History Society.

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498-506 Moseley Road,  
Balsall Heath.

Birmingham B12 9AH

[www.balsallheathhistory.co.uk](http://www.balsallheathhistory.co.uk)

[www.thelostchildren.uk](http://www.thelostchildren.uk)

email: [info@balsallheathhistory.co.uk](mailto:info@balsallheathhistory.co.uk)

We can also be found on Facebook

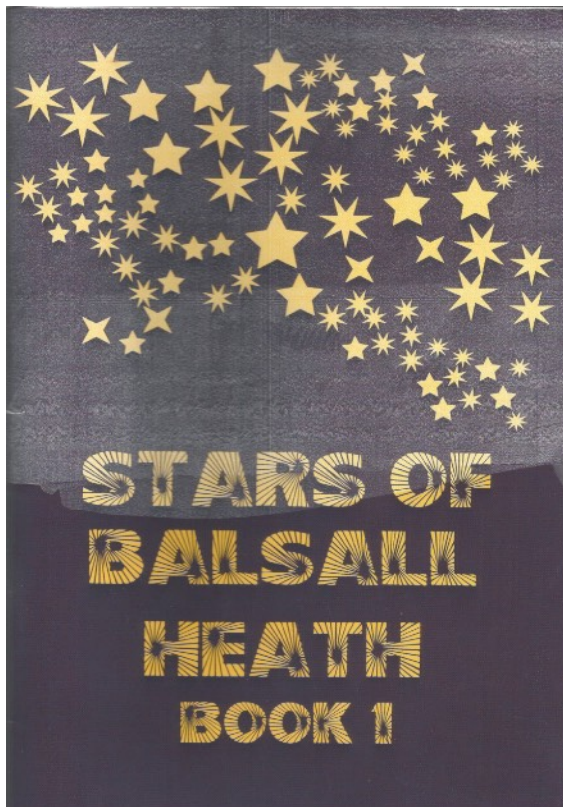


# Publications by Balsall Heath Local History Society

All our publications are available to order on our website, [www.balsallheathhistory.co.uk](http://www.balsallheathhistory.co.uk)

**The Lost Children.** The story of over 5000 children emigrated by the Middlemore Homes in Birmingham to Canada between 1873 & 1954.

**Stars of Balsall Heath.** Vol 1. A few of our most famous Balsall Heathans.

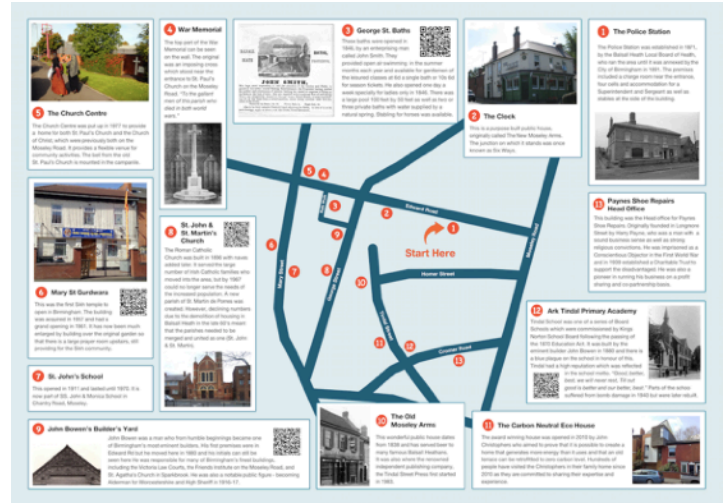


**Sweet Memories** A dictionary of confectionery from times gone by.

**Balsall Heath Through Time** by Val Hart. This book illustrates some of the major changes to the area since 1939.

**The Flicks** Memories of the cinemas in Balsall Heath.

**The Moseley Road Trail** The Development of the Moseley Road from the 1740s.



**A Street Trail** of the Edward Rd area.

**Brown Paper and Goose Grease** A Dictionary of Traditional Remedies.

**Balsall Heath, A History** by Val Hart. Our development from the heath of the 18th century to the suburbs of the 1940s.

**Balsall Heath & Highgate Past & Present**

*Edited by Val Hart and Alan Hemming*  
Photographs of the area by topic.

**Tales Out Of School** Edited by Val Hart.

Memories of schooldays by adults from Balsall Heath and beyond, spanning more than a century and five continents.

**The Gazette** Our monthly newsletter. Stories and photographs from the past and present.