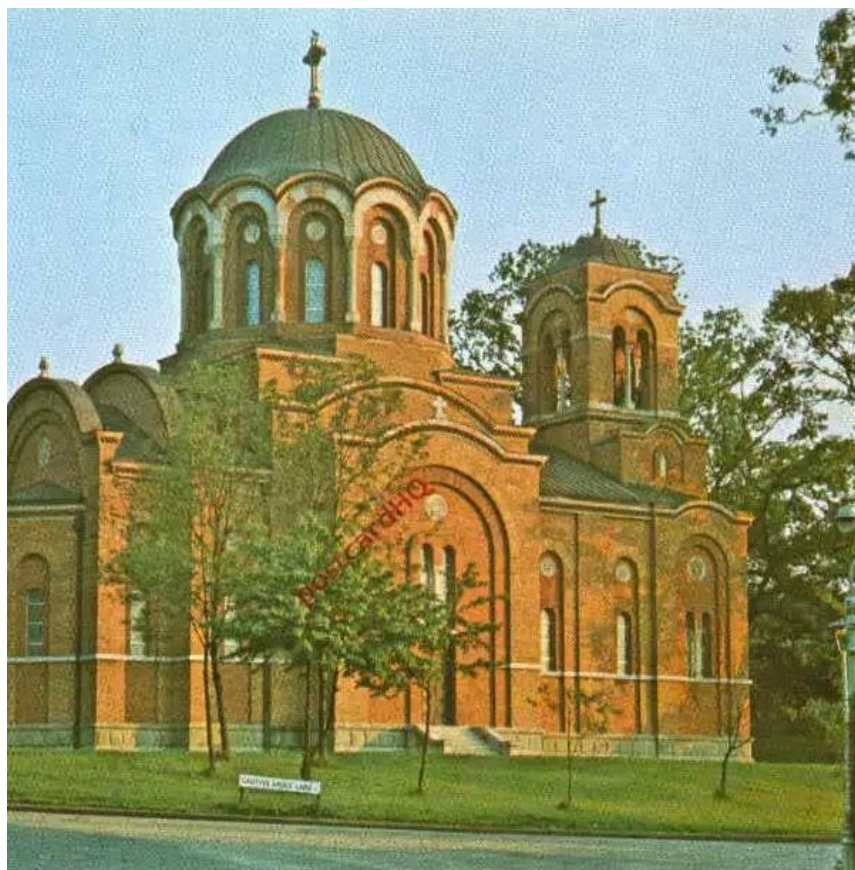


## Trip Out July 22<sup>nd</sup>

There will be no Local History Society meeting in July. Instead we have arranged for a guided tour of **the Serbian Orthodox Church**, Griffin's Brook Lane, Bournville. B30 1QG



Meet there for the tour to start at 2 pm. There will be a charge of £6 which includes tea and cakes. Pay on the day but please let us know if you are coming either by e mail to [info@balsallheathhistory.co.uk](mailto:info@balsallheathhistory.co.uk) or phone : 07565 194822



### In Memoriam. Monica Dyer 1942-2024

I am sad to announce the death of Monica, who has been a loyal member and supporter of the Local History Society for many years. She was an active member of Willows Road Residents Association at one time, which is how I met her. She was always

ready to help others and will be much missed.

Val Hart

## Balsall Heath Local History Society Gazette

### JUNE 2024



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

Facebook: Balsall Heath Local History Society and lostchildrenproject

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 are: £1 for members and £3 for visitors. Meetings are held at St Paul's Venture, Malvern Street at 7:30 pm. Refreshments will be served from 7 p.m to 7:15 p.m. Coming soon Thursday 27th June 7pm for 7.30pm John Smith talking about Radio Memories Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July guided tour of the Serbian Orthodox Church see left for details

## The Old Clifton Junior School

**We were all shocked by the recent fire in the old buildings. So sad to see it in flames.**



This is what the tower looked like before the fire in April this year. Strangers to the area used to ask if it was a church.

The tower was actually designed to provide ventilation for the school building but over the years has provided its own wildlife sanctuary for Balsall Heath pigeons.



Clifton Road School, as it was originally called, opened in 1878 with three separate departments; Girls, Boys and Infants, providing for a total of 868 pupils. It was a 'Board School', set up by the Kings Norton School Board, following the 1870 Education Act. The original Infant Department, in a separate building, is still there, occupied currently by St Paul's School. The building which burnt originally housed both the Boys and Girls Departments, the boys upstairs and the girls downstairs. They were kept completely apart with different entrances as well as different playgrounds. Each department had its own Head Teacher.

School at that time was very strict and the curriculum very limited. "The Three Rs" ( Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) were the main focus of attention. Discipline was harsh, with liberal use of the cane for both misdemeanours and poor work. Schools were paid according to the results they achieved, assessed by Government Inspectors.

Pupils learnt mainly by rote, reading out loud together with a repetitive question and answer format so it would have been very noisy, although the children were not allowed to talk to each other in class. Writing was taught first on slates and then on paper using pen and ink. Later, the curriculum became more varied. The girls were taught needlework while the boys did woodwork and metalwork. Outstanding pupils could go on to become Pupil Teachers or to more advanced classes at Dennis Rd School (now called Anderton Park).





*1900 Science Equipment being taken to schools.*



*Clifton Road, c.1900*

At the time the school opened there was a shortage of trained teachers and this issue was addressed by the Pupil Teacher scheme, a form of apprenticeship for young people, starting at age 13. They frequently faced an impossible task, having to take responsibility for large classes, with very little support or training.

In 1884 the Inspector of the Girls School gave high praise for behaviour. At that point the girls were also taught "moral lessons" including "Honour, Love of Home, Peace, Governance of Temper, and Forgiveness." Arithmetic was less successful. Only 159 passed out of a possible 329. Attendance was always a problem.

Many thousands of local children attended the school and many have recorded their memories. One of them told us what the Clifton pupils used to chant.

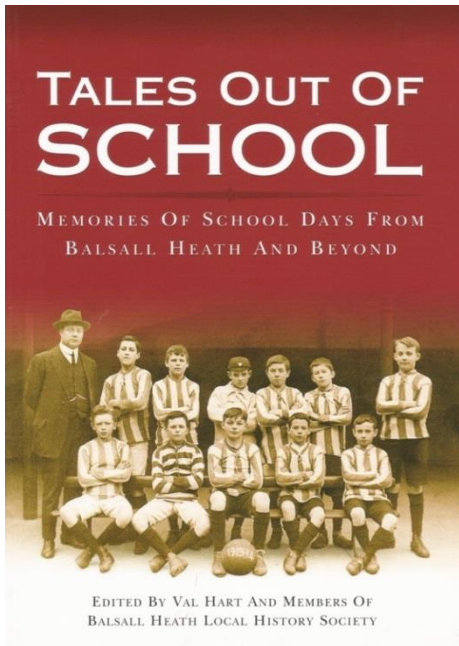
*"Tindal Street are tin tacks, Dennis Road are cats*

*But when you come to Clifton College, Please raise your hats."*

We are keen to record more memories of the old Clifton school so do please contact us. We are also going to mount an Exhibition at the Old Print Works on the Moseley Rd in September and there will be a special display there relating to the school.



The Junior School moved to its new building in the year 2000. For many years after that the Society ran a Victorian and WW2 Classroom in one of the downstairs classroom de-furbished to look the part. The teacher for our visiting school groups was Bron Salway.



### **"Tales Out of School"**

The Local History Society collected many schoolday memories for our book, "Tales Out of School" and quite a lot of these relate to Clifton. The book is on sale now at a bargain price of £2. and can be obtained by contacting us. By post, there would be an additional charge of £2.50. It can be ordered from our website: **[balsallheathhistory.co.uk](http://balsallheathhistory.co.uk)**.

Val Hart

### **MAY 2024 – BIRMINGHAM CITY CENTRE**

#### **A TALK GIVEN BY KEITH CLENTON**

Our speaker on May 30<sup>th</sup> was Keith Clenton and he showed us his collection of slides of Birmingham City Centre past and present.

The slideshow took the form of a virtual walk round the City Centre, starting with a photo from 1911 of horses in Horsefair. This was at a time when horses were bought and sold there, hence the name.



A 1950s photo showed the same area with buses and trams, but everything looked completely different in a recent photo showing a high rise apartment block under construction. It became apparent throughout the talk that high rise buildings now dominate the skyline of the City Centre. Leaving Horsefair and heading towards Suffolk St, the old photo showed Suffolk St before the ring road was created and later photos showed the underpass and the Radisson Hotel reaching to the

sky. Keith had been to the top of the hotel and taken various aerial shots of the City. Turning right into Smallbrook St, we saw the old Scala cinema and then the current sweep of buildings which follow the curve of Smallbrook Queensway. Birmingham Council have passed plans for this building to be demolished, but some groups are trying to save it.



Turning into Hurst St we saw a photo of The Locarno, this brought back many memories for members. Unfortunately, the Locarno has now closed down.

The memories continued as we saw various photos of the Bull Ring over the years and also images of the many shops which have now disappeared – The Co-op in High St, The Beehive in Albert St, Lewis's, Greys and C& A to name but a few.







From the many photos we saw, old and new, one thing which was clear was that traffic jams in the City Centre are nothing new.

1960s New St, Birmingham.

The slide show finished with a shot looking towards the City Centre from St Andrews, (Birmingham City Football Club). This interesting image confirmed that the Birmingham skyline is now dominated by high rise buildings and we know that many more are in the pipeline.

(The above photos are not the actual photos used in Keith's slideshow.)

JH

## Dates for your Diary

**Midland Ancestors** 

**Local and Family History Fair**

**THE** Birmingham focussed Heritage & Community Event

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2024**  
10:00 till 4:00  
**The Main Hall**  
**Edward VI High School for Girls**  
**King Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham B15 2UB**



**ALEXANDER PARKES**  
1813-1890  
INVENTOR OF THE FIRST PLASTIC  
WORKED ON THIS SITE FOR  
ELKINGTON, MASON & COMPANY  
ELKINGTON PLAYS  
CIRCA 1840-1850



35+ tables featuring community groups, non-profits, local history groups, genealogy groups, military interest, small commercials, postcards, photographs, memorabilia, books, souvenirs in an easily accessible location on the ground floor and a reputable historic setting.

**Children's Free Entry**

Free parking      Wi-Fi      Refreshments

Tickets £2 on the door or in Advance thru Eventbrite (fees apply)  
Or the Midland Ancestors On line shop - [midland-ancestors.shop](https://midland-ancestors.shop)  
More information on the dedicated website [www.birmingham.historyfair.uk](https://www.birmingham.historyfair.uk)

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2024      10:00 – 4:00**

**Midland Ancestors Heritage Event – Local & Family History Fair**, The Main Hall, King Edward VI High School for Girls, Edgbaston Park Road Bham B15 2UB

**Weds July 17th at 8 pm “A Worker’s Paradise” at the Blue Orange Theatre**, a new play to celebrate Cadbury’s 200th Anniversary by the Birmingham History Theatre Company, with songs by Peter Churchill.

**7,10 & 13 July. The Flying Dutchman** presented by Persona Arts at The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire,, Birmingham, B4 7XR

*The performances are dedicated to the memory of Bron Salway, former teacher and supporter of Byron and a trustee of the history society*

For more info: <https://www.personaarts.org.uk/opera-masterclass-susan-bullock>

Amendment - Above link is incorrect, it should be - <https://www.personaarts.org.uk/whats-on>

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