

Balsall Heath Local History Society Gazette

SEPTEMBER 2024



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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 are: £1 for members and £3 for visitors.

From October to April inclusive, meetings will be held at St Paul's Venture, Malvern St. off Clifton Rd. B12 8NN. Refreshments will be served at 10.45 a.m. followed by a speaker
Coming soon

Thursday Sept 26th 7 pm for a 7.30 start SOCIETY AGM, followed by Paul Jacques talking about the Warwickshire & Birmingham Home Guard
Monday 21st October 10:45 a.m for 11 a.m. Irene De Boo talking about Louisa Ryland

The Local History Exhibition 2024

On the morning of Friday September 6th, the exhibition was set up and ready for viewing. It was held in the Drawing Room at the Old Print Works and was Balsall Heath Local History Society's contribution to Birmingham Heritage Week.

On entry to the room visitors would find along the whole of the left-hand side of the room a display about The Lost Children Project. It was great to see some of our local people who are relatives of Middlemore children, among those who came to the exhibition.



At the end of this row of panels, Bernie McClean from Midland Ancestors was showing a slideshow of his Middlemore stories. He was on hand to talk to visitors and share his knowledge of the Middlemore Homes children.

At the bottom of the room, there was a display of photos and information about Clifton Rd School and in the bottom right-hand corner a collection of artefacts. Amongst the artefacts were various items of laundry equipment, a school desk and a large early 20th century record player.



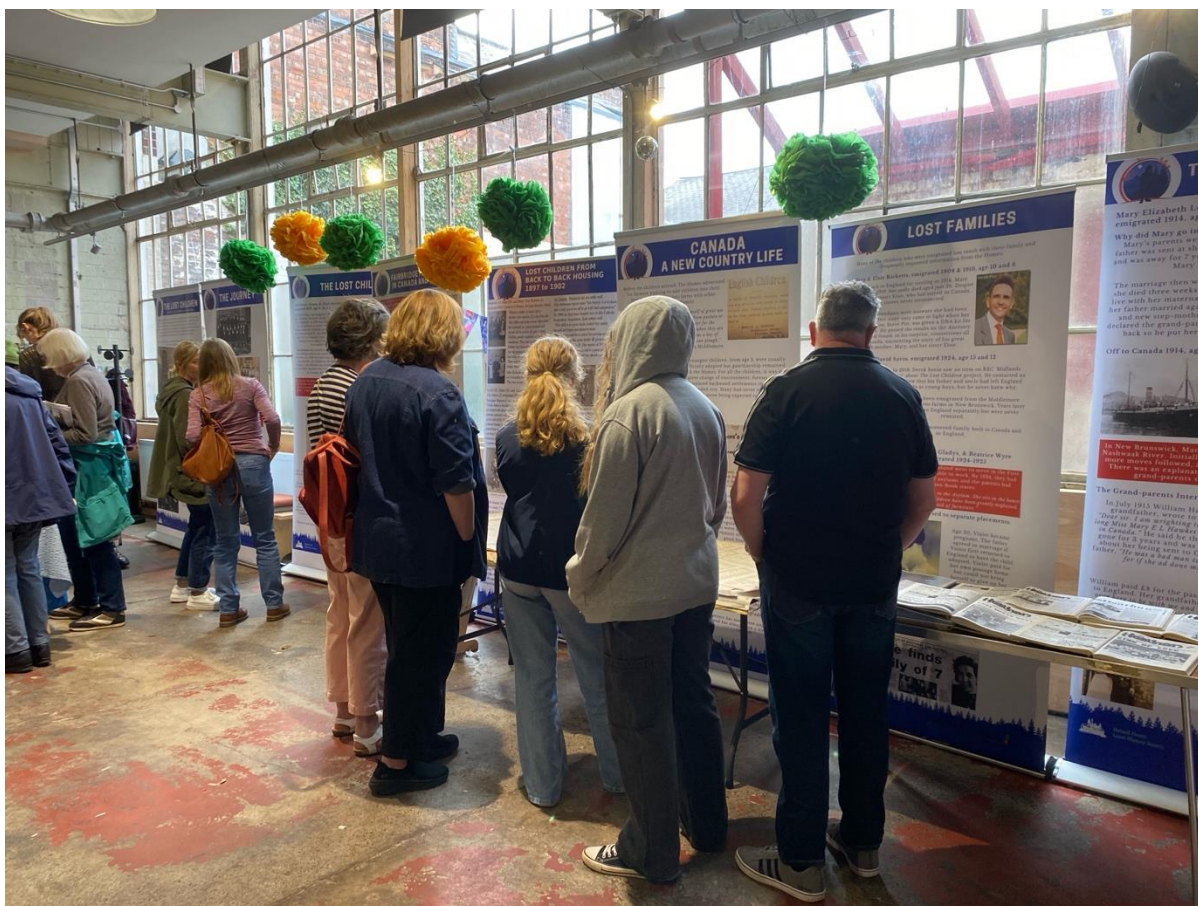
Continuing round the room there were more panels. These contained many photographs and articles showing the changing face of Balsall Heath. A selection of the History Society's books were on sale every day and on the Saturday a table full of all sorts of artefacts were on sale.



The highlight of Saturday took place at 2pm when Val Hart launched the revised and updated edition of her book 'Balsall Heath A History'. The launch was listened to with interest and enthusiasm. A copy of the book was presented to Mick Fitzpatrick in memory of his brother, Jim Fitzpatrick. Jim assisted Val in preparing the book for publication and donations made in memory of Jim were used in part payment of the publication costs. Mick gave a short speech to express his gratitude and spoke with emotion about his brother.

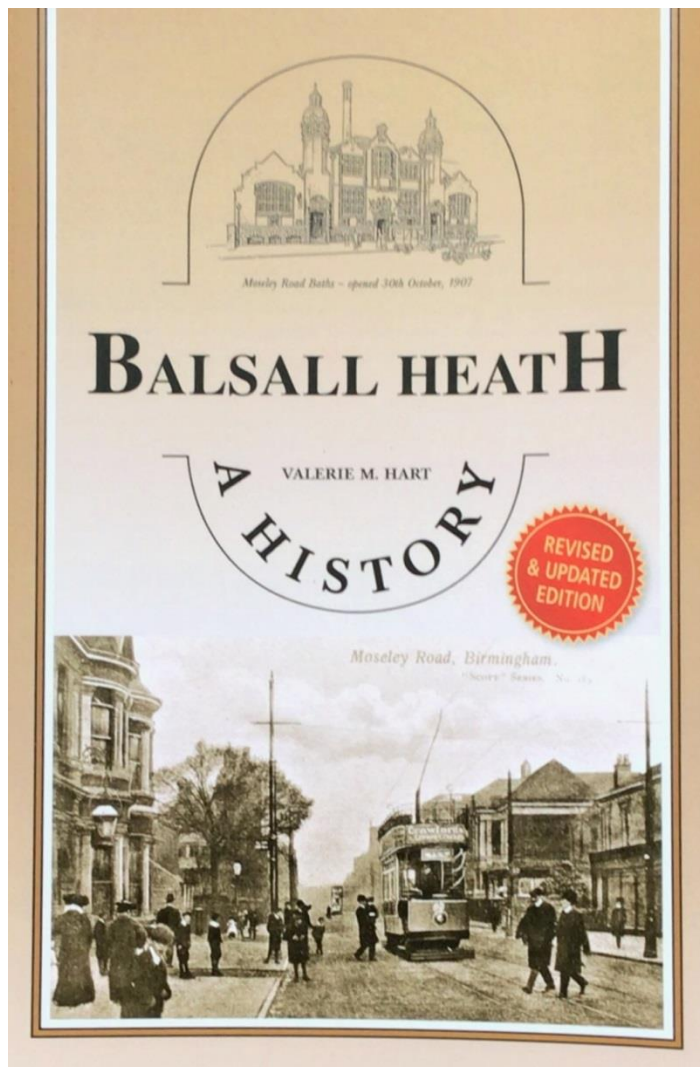


Favourable comments about the exhibition were made in the Visitors' Book. For example: "Very good exhibition with so much information." "Fantastic. Really enjoyed it" "It was a pleasure talking to staff and learning historical facts" "Talk & display really marvellous"



It was clear that visitors had a good experience and members had many enjoyable conversations.

JH



Balsall Heath. A History Revised and Updated Edition

Now available via our website or at our office in the Print Works. Can also be purchased on Ebay and Amazon. Price £10.95.

Dramatic Trail of the Moseley Road. Sunday 8th September

This was performed twice by the Birmingham History Theatre Company as part of Birmingham Heritage Week. The route ran along the Moseley Road from the Exhibition to Sherbourne Rd and back. Characters included staff from the Library and Baths; Mr Ryland; Ethel Griffin, Lodging House Keeper and Mr Butcher.

The audience also witnessed Mrs Hobson escaping the riots of 1891 and neighbours alarmed by a lion escaping from the zoo in Sherbourne Rd. Val Hart took the role of Tour Leader. A very good time was had by all with excellent feedback from attendees.



Dedication of the new Civilian Memorial at Brandwood End Cemetery 11th September



This was a memorable occasion, attended by various dignitaries including Councillor John Cotton, Dr Carl Chinn, Deacon David Fairbotham, Matt Felkin and members of Barra (Bham Air Raids Remembrance Association) who brought standards.

Quite a number of those commemorated on the stone were from Balsall Heath and Highgate, including the people killed in the air raid on the Carlton Cinema in 1940.



Val Hart

Who remembers Acacia Terrace?

This was off Clifton Road near Ladypool Rd, where the car park now stands. Gone in the 1970s but not forgotten. Recently we had an enquiry from Jessica who was seeking her great grandfather and there he was in Acacia Terrace. This photo is from 1917



Charles Williams, the chap in the hat, was a harness maker and this is a photo taken in Acacia Terrace on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. Jessie married Frederick Palmer, the tall man in the middle, and to her right is Harriet, Charles' second wife. They lived there for over thirty years and both are buried in Brandwood end Cemetery. Thank you, Jessica, for this lovely photo!

Acacia Terrace was also home to Dennis Jukes, featured in the Gazette of Feb, 2021, which is available on our website.

Val Hart

Library to Re-open

At a recent Library Consultation meeting it was revealed that money had been found to complete the reconstruction of Balsall Heath Library and it is expected to re-open in spring of 2026

Black History Month

October is Black History Month. Although most of the events locally are more cultural than historical there are several history articles on their website <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/> as well as advertising for their regular magazine and resource pack for schools.