

**Balsall Heath Local
History Society Gazette**

MARCH 2025



Telephone: 07565 194822

Email:

info@balsallheathhistory.co.uk

Web:

www.balsallheathhistory.co.uk

www.thelostchildren.uk

Facebook: Balsall Heath Local
History Society and
lostchildrenproject

Membership of the Society costs £15 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 £4 for visitors.

Refreshments will be served at 11:00 a.m. followed by a speaker

Coming soon

Monday 24th March. 11:00 a.m.,
Quiz with Patrick Baird

Next Meeting of the Society Monday 24th March

VENUE

This month we will again be meeting in the function room at the Creation Climbing Centre and Skatepark (ex Tram Depot) at 10.45 am for a start at 11 am

Address: 582 Moseley Rd B12 9AA

Access: The entrance is behind the building at the front which is currently covered in scaffolding (ex Tram Offices).

There is some car parking space available or park in Trafalgar Rd.

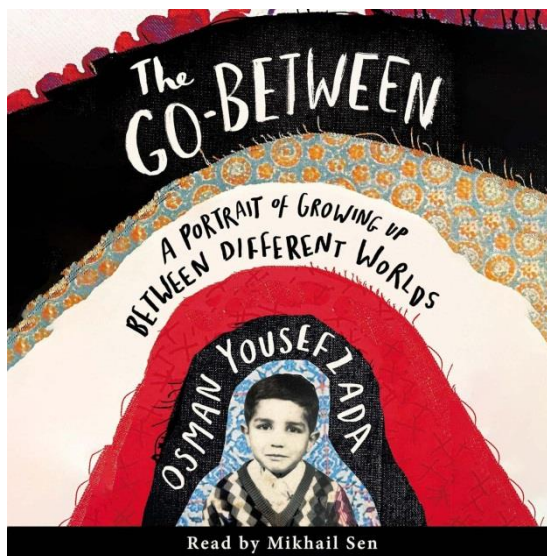
This month Patrick Baird will be running a quiz-

“Know Your Birmingham?”

We will sort out teams on the day so come along and have a go!

Next Month

Balsall Heath Local History Society presents



A Talk by Osman Yousefzada

**GROWING UP IN BALSALL
HEATH IN THE 1980s**

**Thursday April 24th at 7.15 pm
at St Paul's Venture, Malvern St, off
Clifton Rd, Balsall Heath B12 8NN**

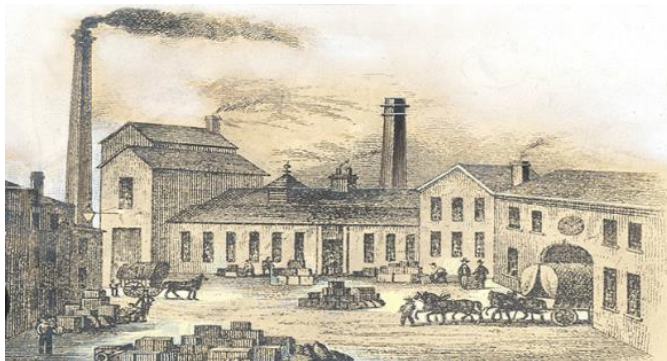
Osman is a British interdisciplinary artist, writer and social activist who has won international acclaim. This talk is based on his book "The Go Between" which was published last year *Osman grew up on the borders of Balsall Heath and Moseley attending Park Hill and Queensbridge Schools. The adult world is seen through Osman's eyes as a child: his own devout Pakistani patriarchal community, with its divide between the world of men and women, living cheek-by-jowl with parallel migrant communities. The orthodox attend a mosque down the road from the prostitutes and pimps.*

GEORGE CADBURY 1839 – 1922 FEBRUARY 24TH 2025

The last meeting was held on February 24th and took place at a different venue. The meeting was held at Creation Climbing Centre, Moseley Rd (The Old Tram Depot). The room will also be the venue for the next meeting on March 24th. Andrew Reekes gave a very interesting talk about George Cadbury.

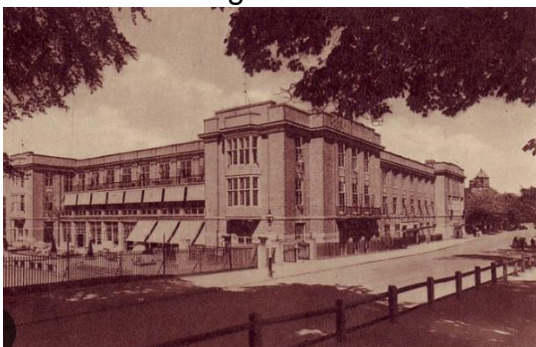
George Cadbury was born in 1839 and was a man of many talents. He was a businessman, educator, social reformer, liberal, a non-conformist Quaker, an advocate of temperance, a builder, a newspaper proprietor and a philanthropist. Quakers were excluded from power, but not from business.

Richard and George Cadbury built the Bridge Street factory in Birmingham.



Cadbury Factory at Bridge Street

After Richard died, George became the leading light in the business. George understood the need to take the business abroad and also had a good understanding of marketing. His two most important products were Cadbury's Dairy Milk and Bournville Cocoa. He wanted the chocolate drink to be a replacement for alcohol, which he fought hard to eradicate. George showed great concern for his employees and their living standards. He was alarmed by the slum housing in the centre of Birmingham and had a vision to set up his factory away from the city centre in Bournville.



The Cadbury Factory at Bournville



Bournville Village Trust Houses

His vision included establishing the model village in Bournville. George Cadbury was keen for his employees to improve themselves and promoted Further Education for his workforce.

He built Institutes in Selly Oak, Northfield and Stirchley and a school in Bournville. The school had spacious classrooms and playgrounds.



Bournville Junior School



Selly Oak Institute

In line with Cadbury's stance against alcohol, no public houses were allowed to be built in Bournville and no alcohol could be brought in to the village.

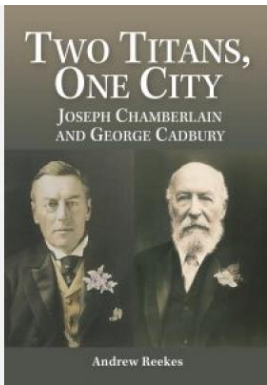
George Cadbury introduced half day working on Saturdays to enable employees to take part in leisure activities. In 1906, he introduced a pension scheme, which he started off with a £60,000 gift to the pension fund. Five shillings per week was paid to seventy year old pensioners.

Joseph Chamberlain was a contemporary of George Cadbury, but the differences between the two great men of Birmingham were highlighted. Cadbury had a strong dislike of politics, but Chamberlain was very active in the political world. Both were keen to make massive improvements in the city, but Chamberlain looked at the wider picture and concentrated on projects for the good of the whole city, such as bringing clean water to the city and clearing slums in the city centre. Cadbury acted to improve the lives of his own employees. He did not like to be in the public eye and he had no desire to be involved in politics. He disliked public speaking except to his workforce.

George Cadbury was a devout Christian and a good family man, but he did have a strong controlling streak. He insisted that married women must leave work and all sporting activities were planned by him. In his lifetime, Cadbury gave away over £500,000 to charitable causes, including The Children's Hospital.

Everything about George Cadbury sounds good and honourable, but there was one scandal which came to light at the beginning of the twentieth century. It came to Cadbury's attention that slave labour was being used to gather the cocoa beans used to make Cadbury products. Despite being made aware of this, no immediate action was taken by Cadbury. It was not until 1909 that Cadburys stopped using cocoa beans which had been obtained by slave labour. George's son, William Cadbury had sourced an alternative supply of beans.

George Cadbury died in 1922 and the business carried on in the capable hands of his sons, William and George Junior.



Further reading:-

Two Titans, One City.

Joseph Chamberlain and George Cadbury by Andrew Reekes.

JH

Events

The Austin Village.

Monday 7 April - 2pm

An illustrated talk on The Austin Village. Hazel Griffiths from the Austin Village Preservation Society will bring to life the history of the Austin Village; a unique residential community in Birmingham of 200 red cedar pre-fabricated bungalows. This event is organised by Friends of Birmingham Archives and Heritage event (FoBAH) .

How to attend - Please email fobah@outlook.com to reserve a place. This is a free event, but a donation to the Austin Village Preservation Society would be appreciated on the day.

Venue - Heritage Learning Space, level 4 Library of Birmingham

George Dawson and the Civic Gospel.

Wednesday 16 April - 7.15pm-8.45pm.

Talk by Andrew Reekes, 'George Dawson and the Civic Gospel: Transforming Birmingham'. Organised by the King's Heath Local History Society.

How to attend - In person, booking not required. Free for King's Heath Local History Society members, visitors £3 on the door.

Venue - Heathfield Road Community Centre, Kings Heath.

Shenley Heritage Day.

Tuesday 22 April - 11am-3pm.

A family friendly event to celebrate and explore one of the Bournville Village Trust estates.

How to attend - Free event, no booking required, just drop in between 11am and 3pm. More information here - <https://www.sellymanormuseum.org.uk/events/2025-04-22/shenley-heritage-day>

Venue - Shenley Court Hall, 200 Meadow Green Road, B29 4ED.

Events