

# the Heathman

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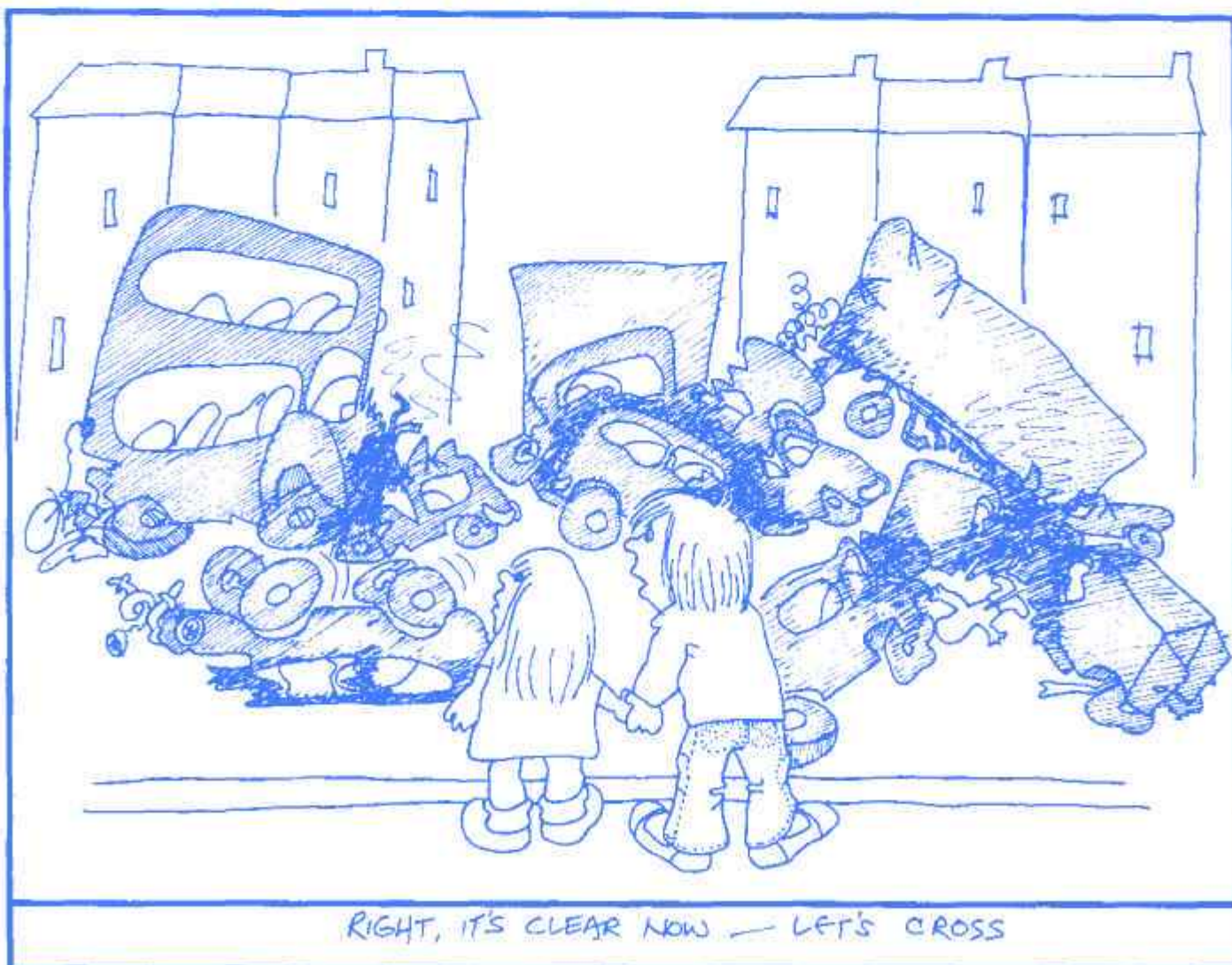
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## ARE LOCAL ROADS SAFE FOR YOUR CHILD?

Why Worry About Kids on the Roads? As no doubt everyone knows, or would expect, over the last ten years or so the number of people killed or injured on British roads has gone up and up. What people may not be so aware of is that accidents to CHILDREN have increased far more dramatically than accidents to adults.

If we consider only our own city of Birmingham we can see the extent of this change. In ten years, accidents to adult pedestrians went up by about 40%. In the same length of time accidents to children went up by about 125%.

More Cause For Worry If You Live in Birmingham. Our city, far from being a good place to live, as far as safety on the road goes, is about the worst town in Britain. Although accidents everywhere have gone up - in Birmingham they have gone up MORE than anywhere else. Accidents in Brum have increased by three times the national average for urban areas. (Over the page we look at accidents in Balsall Heath.)





## Appalling number injured

So its not very safe for children on the roads anywhere in Britain. Its especially not safe in Birmingham. But the real nightmare for those who live in this area is that studies have shown that Balsall Heath is one of the worst spots for road accidents in the worst city. What does this mean? One thing that it means is that children in our area ARE ABOUT TWICE AS LIKELY TO BE KNOCKED DOWN when they cross the road than children in most other districts of Birmingham. They are three times as likely to be knocked down as children in other towns in Britain.

### Our Study...

We looked at all road accidents (adults and children) that happened in Balsall Heath area between March and October 1973. This was the most recent period for which much information was available. During those eight months last year there was a total of 88 accidents involving injury or death for someone. Of the 88 people killed or injured on our local roads 32 (36%) were children under fourteen.

In Britain's urban areas as a whole, children are only 14% of all casualties on the roads. In Birmingham as a whole children are only 18.8% of all casualties on the roads. So we are bound to conclude that our children are much more at risk than those who live anywhere else.

We must point out that there was nothing unusual about the eight months we looked at in detail. Perhaps there are more accidents in the winter, so that if we had done a study including November to March our total number of accidents would have been greater. But the proportion of child casualties would have been the same. A few years ago a special study of the area was carried out by another group, and this showed the child accidents as about 36% of the total too.

### HOW do the accidents happen?

First we must say that we are looking at HOW the children are being injured with a view, of course, to being able to DO something about it. We dont have all the information which would be useful, but we can make some suggestions, and we hope it will help.

### Which Kids Are Injured?

We know something about which children are being knocked down which may help. Most obviously, in our area it is BOYS rather than girls. Over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the child casualties in our area March-Oct. 1973 were boys. Is this because parents and school are less cautious with boys than girls, and so the boys themselves are less careful?

Then- the great majority of children knocked down (over  $\frac{3}{4}$  again) were under eleven years old. MORE THAN A FIFTH were under five. In the case of the under fives we can hardly ask for more vigilance from the schools. So we are forced to ask if parents, neighbours, older kids, etc. are keeping enough of an eye on the toddlers.

### Where Are They Injured?

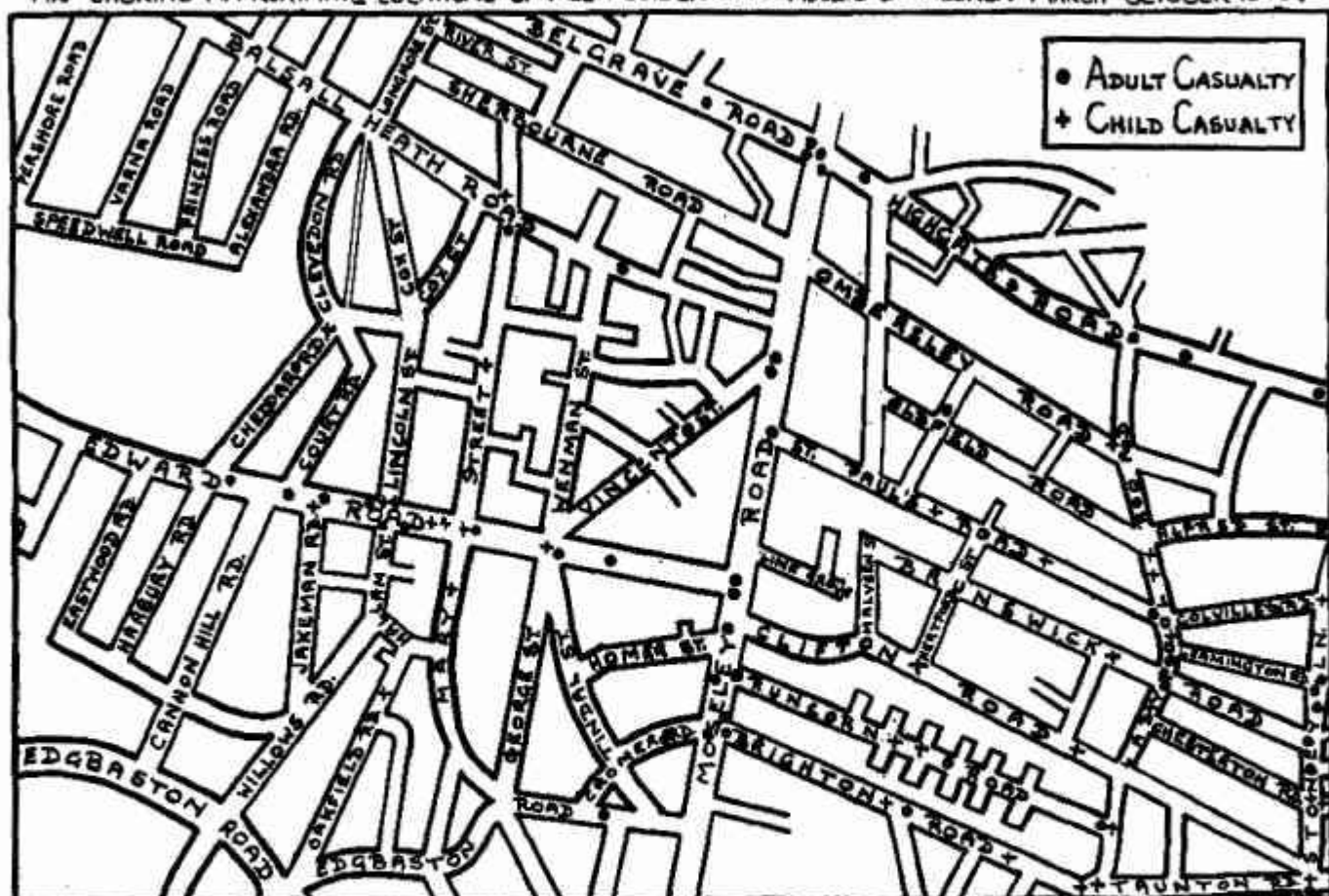
We know something about where the children are being run over which may help. In our area, 59% of the children who were knocked down, were hit in SIDE ROADS, whereas 41% were hit on the MAIN ROADS. This might not be so striking till we notice that among the adult casualties 28% were knocked down on side roads and 72% on the main roads. This follows a pattern found elsewhere: children are more likely to be knocked down on side roads, adults on main roads. From this we may guess, perhaps, that parents and school are very much concerned to warn children about the dangers of the main roads, reminding them to cross at zebra or lollipop crossings, and taking care not to send them on errands that involve going over a main road. BUT perhaps their own street, and nearby side streets seem much safer, to parents, schools and children themselves. Unfortunately this is simply NOT SO.

One macabre piece of information we may add here is that children knocked down in the side streets are usually hit by drivers who live in the area nearby.

But we dont just want to urge people to look after the kids and give them good advice. There are things we can learn by looking at where the accidents happen which suggest other ways of reducing the number of casualties.

There are some roads which have so many accidents that it is clear that further measures must be taken to control traffic and make them safer for both pedestrians and drivers. Even in the side roads where there are "only" two or three casualties each year some things could be done which might prevent these accidents altogether. (Continued on p. 2)

MAP SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS OF ALL ACCIDENTS TO ADULTS & CHILDREN MARCH-OCTOBER 1973.



## BEWARE THE BLACKSPOT

We found that one road in particular in our area has a terrible record for accidents. If you look at our map on page 2 you can see what a large number of accidents took place in EDWARD ROAD. (18 out of the 88 casualties March-Oct. 1973 were involved in accidents somewhere in this road.) Last year was not an oddity - for years Edward Road has had an absurdly high rate of accidents. It is as dangerous - in fact MORE DANGEROUS than the main roads in the area such as Ladypool Rd. or Moseley Rd.

### WHY IS EDWARD ROAD ACCIDENT-PRONE?

Again many people will not be surprised that Edward Road has such a bad record. Though they may be surprised that it is taking so long to do anything about it. We all know that Edward Road is quite a wide thoroughfare linking Moseley Road to Pershore Rd. and therefore providing a convenient cut-through for those looking for a quicker route. It also has no less than six cross-roads, all heavily used. The Heathen's investigators are amazed that so far nothing has been done to recognise the fact that Edward Road is used as a major thoroughfare by way of introducing the safety precautions found on other main roads. There are NO traffic lights at the various cross-roads, at most of which visibility is very poor for motorists and pedestrians. There IS a lollipop crossing for the schoolchildren, but there are no zebra crossings. There are no controls on car-parking, which makes the problem of poor visibility even worse.

### WE CAN'T AFFORD TO WAIT.

Now undoubtedly the plan for re-development in the area includes many provisions which WHEN THEY ARE CARRIED OUT will make Edward Road much safer. The plans include, for example, closing off most of the side roads that at present cross Edward Rd. (Lincoln St. etc.). This will be a major improvement in the sense that most of the accidents, as we can see from the map, do occur at the cross-roads. But the point is that these plans are to be put into effect 'SOME TIME IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS'. When exactly 'some time' is, of course, must remain a mystery for us. What CAN BE predicted is that for every year the plans are not carried out there will be 20 or more accidents up Edward Rd. If we don't care - and surely everyone does - about the people who are injured or killed, surely we care about the cost of these accidents to the rate and tax-payers? It cannot be the case that there is nothing that can be done as a temporary measure while we are all waiting for redevelopment. WHAT ABOUT SOME TRAFFIC LIGHTS? WHAT ABOUT SOME PARKING CONTROLS?



ONE OF THE MANY DANGEROUS CROSS-ROADS IN EDWARD ROAD.

### MORE PARKING CONTROLS NEEDED.

The other roads in the area are not, of course, free from accidents. There are many on the main roads, and again we think that there is something which can be done. Although there are some parking restrictions already, we think there should be more. At present parking is permitted on one side of Moseley Rd and Ladypool Rd., for example, at all times. This is particularly dangerous and ridiculous in the case of Ladypool Rd. which is narrow but heavily used by traffic. The parked cars obstruct the view of both pedestrians and motorists. They cause other cars to pull out dangerously. Whenever 'No Parking' rules have been introduced elsewhere on main roads in shopping areas, there has been a FALL in the accident rate. (There is

usually some protest at first from shopkeepers and motorists who worry about the loss of business or convenience to themselves. This does not seem important to the Heathen alongside the casualties that happen now.) Again this is NOT an expensive measure to take, and need not wait for redevelopment.

### HOW IS YOUR CAR PARKED?

As far as the accidents on the side roads go, the situation is more difficult. Again parked cars - this time usually all down both sides all the time at day and night - are a major factor in accidents. Residents seldom have a garage, and must have somewhere to leave their cars. All we can say here is: if you have to leave your car in the road, at least leave it parked the right way round, so that you don't have to pull out across the road. (This is especially important in our area because of the poor street-lighting.) We were glad to see the police recently calling at houses to ask people to turn their cars the right way-though we doubt if they will have the time to keep at it.

### OPERATION STAY ALIVE - PLEASE!

The last points we want to make are again about the children who are involved in so many of the accidents. Most of the child casualties were hurt in side roads, and many of them were on their way to or from school at the time. Now some things have been done to help this situation - for example there are many school-crossings in our area and quite a few of these are in side roads. But if there are still so many accidents to children on their way to or from school in our area, then there is still a lot of work to be done making their routes safer. In Handsworth, which also has a very bad record for accidents to children there is at present a campaign going on called 'Operation Stay Alive'. There the schools, police and road safety experts are co-operating in producing plans to make children safer on the roads. This involves studies of the routes by which children typically go to and from school, among other things, with a view to finding ways of making these safer. So far the Handsworth project seems to be going very well, and it seems to us that there is a very good case for a similar campaign in our area. We would like to know what local schools, parents and others think of this idea. Indeed we would like to know if anyone has any more suggestions. Please write to us - we want to help in any way we can.

### SIMPLE REMEDY.

One last point. Many of the children who are injured in our area are still being knocked down as they cross the road to or from ICE CREAM vans. This is quite unnecessary and there is a simple way to stop these accidents almost completely. This would be by insisting that all ice cream vans carry TWO people, one of whom is solely concerned with watching the kids across the road. If the van owners cannot afford this then they should not be allowed to go on trading. We have looked at vans touring our area and find that they often DO NOT have two people. We shall be sending a copy of this paper to the local councillors and to our M.P. asking for their support in this matter, and pointing out our other suggestions, and we suggest that anyone else who feels strongly about it writes to the councillors, to us or to their M.P. (Or all three, if you feel strongly enough!)



WHO WILL WATCH OUT FOR KIDS CROSSING TO & FROM THIS VAN ON THEIR OWN?



# READERS' LETTERS

## KEEPING TRACK

Dear Heathan,  
Several children missed the last playground trip, during the Christmas holidays. I'm not blaming the two Robs, but isn't there a better way of announcing future trips? We need to know plans well in advance - it shouldn't be left to chance that kids are at the playground the day before, or the Robs manage to see their mums the night before. I know the Robs work very hard and haven't got much time, so what about the idea of having noticeboards in some of the streets, or posters in shop windows to announce future plans. We'd all get to know then.

Yours sincerely,  
Mrs. J.C. O'Brien.

## VIEWPOINT

Dear Heathan,

Thank you for your interesting 'Shopping Around' article in the last issue. But why did you not give the addresses of ALL the shops? My wife and I don't know where one of them is, and although we do know where Ali's is, it doesn't give the name on the shop so many people may not know it. You do say which roads the two Co-op shops are in, but both Ladypool and Stratford Roads are very long! Nevertheless please carry on the good work. What a pity some of the information given under the 'What's Coming on T.V.' heading was not correct. First, the title of the programme on Balsall Heath was changed, and then even the time was different. We haven't got BBC 2 so I asked my mother-in-law to watch it. She 'turned over' at 10.15 and missed it all. Fortunately, my married daughter saw it and enjoyed it immensely. May I suggest you ask the BBC to repeat the programme as soon as possible.

Now for the compliments. I found the whole publication very well typed, very well set out, and very well printed. How you do it for 2p a copy I do not know, but please carry on doing many more. I must congratulate T. Doyle on referring to our offspring as 'children'. Too many times they are called kids, and if we are to raise ourselves in this 'twilight area' then we must call a spade a spade, and a child a child.

Yours, Bernard Inglis,  
9, Brunswick Rd.

(Editor: Sorry about the mistakes - there were some more as well I'm afraid. Apologies to all those who had to spend ages hunting the crossword solution. We hope to do better in future. Many readers did not like the red ink we tried last time either. They said it looked alright but was difficult to read. We won't do that again!)

## Here's help

Dear Heathan,  
On January 3rd we began to distribute leaflets for our jumble sale. We also began collecting jumble from the neighbourhood. We rode in the car each night to collect the jumble. The neighbours and friends were very helpful. Altogether we collected 15 boxes of jumble. We held the sale on Sat. Jan. 19th on the car park of 120, Brunswick Rd. We each took the responsibility of a stall. Gillian and Julie took care of the women's clothes stall. John Wareing and John Ebrey helped on the toys, men's clothes and record stall. Myself (Elizabeth) took the boy's clothes stall. The total amount added to £3 which we sent to Malvern St. Playground. It was presented to the 'two Robs'. We would like to thank all for their co-operation and kindness. It all went to a good cause.

Yours, Elizabeth, Gillian, John W., John E., Julie and David.

(Editor: We all think you did a great job, and we hope you'll have some more good ideas like this one.)

## IT'S GOOD SENSE

Dear Heathan,  
I am very concerned about peoples' health. I am a member of Clifton Junior School, Class 4J. I think smoke is a very dangerous thing because it kills people. Some are smoking in the buses. It is too bad to smoke in buses or cars - please if you want to smoke go outside in the fresh air. It is also dangerous to smoke in the cinemas. Please stop smoking.

Yours sincerely,  
S. Solanki.

(Editor: Class 4J had a discussion about the problem of pollution, and two more of them - Z. Iqbal and C. Hill also wrote to us, as did their teacher, Mrs. June Jones. We thank them all for their letters and are sorry we haven't got room to print them all.)

## WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Dear Heathan,  
I wonder how many other residents suffer from the bad service offered by the dustbinmen? Ours often goes 3-4 weeks before it is emptied, which makes our back garden a health hazard as well as an eyesore. (We can't keep the rubbish in the bin because apart from there being too much of it, at the end of three weeks, all the dogs - and we agree with a previous reader of yours there are too many of them - come and spread it over the garden looking for scraps of food.) When the dustmen DO come they won't take away any of the larger items like old furniture. What are we supposed to do with them? I think the Council should provide skips for the purpose, rather than forcing people into dumping rubbish on all the waste ground round here that is not very different in appearance to a Council tip.

Yours sincerely,  
P. Kirkpatrick. (Mrs.)

(Editor: We've noticed the rubbish too - and the dustbins! We think it might be an idea if we could get the Council to send a large skip again and put it somewhere central for people to use.)



# problems.

Dear Heathan,  
Do any of your readers know a good cure for MICE? Nothing works on ours. They outwit the cat, and enjoy the poison. They retaliate at me for trying to get at them by running about squeaking as I try to sleep. Does ANYTHING work?

Yours Tiredly,  
C. Henderson.

(Editor: I think you are winning already. Mice are supposed to like the poison. It only kills them slowly - they won't go overnight.)

## PLEASE WRITE TO US.

WE WELCOME LETTERS ON ANY TOPIC from all our readers, though we may have to cut them if they are very long. Please write to us - we long for the postman's knock. Our address is still 120, ST. PAUL'S ROAD, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, 12.



## up your street

Steam trams on the Moseley Road! There can't be many people in Balsall Heath who can remember that, but on Ivy Avenue off Runcorn Road I found an old lady who can recall just that. Rose is a staggering 93 years old. She was born in 1881 and she first moved into Ivy Avenue on 12th May 1913 and has been there ever since. Despite arthritis and occasional giddy spells Rose is really in very good health and prefers to stay in her own house rather than go to a home. She says that after 61 years there she's used to it. Mind you, she gets very lonely now and again. She hasn't got much family left, she has two grand-daughters in Canada and a daughter of 65 who lives at Kings Norton, who she has seen every Sunday without fail throughout the 17 years since Rose's husband died. He was a french polisher, while she was in service, and remembers working nine to five for two shillings a day. In the holidays, in the days before cars came into their own, she would cycle home to see her family in Swindon!

What was life like on Ivy Avenue all those years ago? ..... 'Lovely' says Rose, and people were 'real neighbours then; but she doesn't see many people nowadays, being all but house bound - and sometimes goes 12 hours at a time without seeing a soul. So spare a thought for the Roses of this world and you'll be surprised at the interesting things they can tell you.



Ever trod on a loose brick in the pavement on a wet day, and felt the water shoot up your trouser-leg? Not on Ivy Avenue anyway, for 10-12 years ago the tenants, so I was told, got together and got some themselves some concrete paving slabs, and a couple of concrete posts to stop cars being driven up between the houses. A small touch maybe, but a neat one - and it just goes to show what one can do with a little help from one's friends.

Problem of the moment in Ivy Avenue is the patch of waste-ground between them and the railway embankment. The rubbish that people dump encourages the rats. One gentleman said he had rats 'as big as cats' in his garden shed.

Mind you, if the council made it easier to get rid of excess rubbish there wouldn't be the problem but that's another story.....

mike.

## St PAUL'S NURSERY to RETURN HOME



In previous issues we reported that St. Paul's Nursery had had to leave the church hall at the top of St. Paul's Road, but had found a temporary home in Tindal Street School. We are now very happy to tell our readers that, thanks to the local support the nursery enjoys, and the great need it serves in the area, THE COUNCIL HAS DECIDED TO BUY THE CHURCH HALL and enable the nursery to go back there.

The Council will also be considering other ways of using the hall for community activities, but no firm decisions have been reached on these yet.

### STILL AT TINDAL ST. FOR A WHILE.

For the present the nursery continues in Tindal St. school, and as our pictures show, the children are as busy and as happy as always.



Staff, parents and children will all be very happy of course when they can return to the church hall, because conditions ARE a bit cramped at Tindal St. and the staff in particular are under extra pressure because of this. But they have another worry now, unfortunately. The room they are using at Tindal St. is shortly to be converted for use by another nursery, attached to the school itself. The City Architect's Dept. may want to start work on this in April. If they do St. Paul's Nursery will have to move out again, and may not be able to move straight into the church hall because the sale may not be completed. So - all we can think of to say here is that maybe every silver lining has a cloud.

REPORTED BY TES DOYLE.

## St Paul's Day Care Centre

VACANCIES FOR 2½ - 5 YEAR OLDS



Nursery Hours 7.30 am to 6.00 pm

Now at TINDAL St. SCHOOL  
(ENTRANCE in CROMER ROAD only)

### BOAT NIGHT SHELTER.

Heathmill Lane, Deritend. We are running a night shelter for homeless young men (16-21), and at the moment we are on the lookout for volunteers who could help us in working with these young people. Could YOU afford one night a week, or one a fortnight, say from 10 or 11 p.m. until next morning? OR YOU MAY BE ABLE TO HELP US IF YOU HAVE: unwanted blankets, towels, mugs, beds or any useful furniture, etc.

Tel: 772-2483. Contact Steve Nash.



# THREE DAY WEEK & YOU!

## You're entitled to ....

Almost everyone affected by the government's 3-day week plan can claim certain benefits to avoid hardship. Many people will be well-informed about these benefits through their Trade Union or other sources, but for those who are not clear, we print some details below. We try to tell you what, how and where to claim, and how to appeal if you think you have been unfairly treated.

THESE BENEFITS ARE YOURS BY RIGHT. YOU MUST CLAIM IMMEDIATELY TO AVOID LOSING MONEY.

## Unemployment Benefit

For the two days you are not working each week you can claim flat-rate unemployment benefit. To claim, sign on at your local Employment Exchange on the first day you are off work. Fill in the claim form you are given at once. Have your National Insurance number with you.

The government will not pay unemployment benefit for the first three days of unemployment. It will start on the fourth day you are off work, when you should get paid by Giro. The flat-rate payment for a single person is about £1.45p per day. You will get more than this if you have dependants.

## Supplementary Benefit

If you can't get unemployment benefit you can claim Supplementary Benefit instead, as long as you are not in full-time employment. As well as the basic allowance for your living expenses, £7.15p for a single person, your rent and rates should be paid or an allowance given for your mortgage interest. H.P. payments already started should be paid. Social Security can also pay lump sums for what they call 'exceptional needs' - fuel bills, rent arrears, bedding, clothing, etc. If you need help of this kind apply for an exceptional needs payment. Always appeal if you are refused one. Additional weekly payments can be made to help with heating (especially if someone at home is sick or old or disabled or if your house is difficult to heat.) Extra payments can also be made for special diets, if necessary. To claim Supplementary Benefits first register at your Employment Exchange, then go to the local Social Security office.

## Rent Rebates

Even when your weekly income is over £50 you may still be eligible for a rent rebate. The rebate can be very large. For example, if your weekly income is £22, you are married with 2 children and your rent is £3, you will get ALL your rent paid. A single person with £22 per week income, paying £3 rent would get 60p a week rebate. To get a rebate go to the Council's rebate office. (See our note about the Housing Centre, this page.) This applies whether you are a Council tenant or a private tenant.

## Rate Rebates

This benefit has to be assessed over a six month period so you will not be eligible for it yet. If you are unemployed or working a 3 day week for more than a few weeks you will eventually be entitled to a rate rebate. Apply to the Council next time they ask for your rates, or in a month's time.

## Free School Meals

Children of many people working a 3 day week will be entitled to free school meals. If you earn £25 a week or less and have three children, for example, they should get free school meals. To apply go to the Education Office in Margaret St.

## Other Benefits

People with low incomes, or claiming supplementary benefit can claim financial help for dental and optical treatment and charges, as well as prescription charges. Ask your dentist, optician or doctor

for a claim form and send it to the social security office.

Free milk and vitamins are available for children under school age and expectant mothers when the family receives supplementary benefit or has a low income. Forms to claim these benefits are at post offices and social security offices.

## Appeals

If you think you have been treated unfairly in any way you should APPEAL. Appeals can be made over unemployment benefits, supplementary benefits and rent rebates. Your appeal will normally be considered by a tribunal which includes a member from a trade union. Tribunals often increase payments.

To appeal, write (keeping a copy) to the office which refused your claim, or reduced it, saying why you want to appeal against their decision. The office will then tell you when your appeal will be considered. It does not cost anything to appeal. Your trade union, or the Lane Neighbourhood Centre or the Balsall Heath Association (addresses this page) will advise you and may even arrange to represent you at appeals.

## What You Can't Claim

The government made a political decision to exclude people working a three day week from two very important benefits.

The first is the earnings-related supplement to unemployment benefit. If your wage was £30 before the three day week you would have got an extra £1.40 for each day of unemployment. This will now be paid only to those who are unemployed for 7 consecutive days.

The second benefit you CANT get is Family Income Supplement. (FIS). This would have given a married man with 2 children earning £19 per week an extra £2.05p per week. FIS is only available now if the head of the household (in the case of a couple, the man) is still working more than 30 hours a week. This excludes most people working a three day week. We ought to make a further note here about what you MAY NOT GET. Although in theory those on a three day week are entitled to Supplementary Benefit, it is by no means certain that, in this area at any rate they will in practice succeed in obtaining it. Or so we are advised at any rate by some of the people who have tried to help local residents suffering from the three-day week's effect on their income. This seems more than a little tough on those who can't live on their income now that it is reduced.

We used a leaflet produced by SHELTER as the basis for this article, and thank them for their help. We'd like to point out that most of the above benefits can be claimed by those with low incomes - including pensioners - whether or not they are on 3 day week.

## WHERE TO GO FOR HELP LOCALLY. THE LANE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE.

The Lane's Housing Advice sessions are on Mondays 7 p.m.-9 p.m. and Wednesdays 9.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m. Legal Advice is Wednesdays 7 p.m.-9 p.m. English lessons for Asian ladies, Tuesdays 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m., and Thursdays 2.00-4.00. Police Advice night is Thursdays 7-8.30 p.m. The Neighbourhood Centre is open ALL DAY on week days for advice of a general nature. All advice is FREE. If you have a legal problem-or some other kind, which is worrying you and you need expert advice, DONT DELAY because this may mean extra complications. Go to the Lane as soon as you can. They are there to help you. Address: 422, Ladypool Road.

## BALSALL HEATH ASSOCIATION.

Balsall Heath Association also gives free legal and Housing advice. Come on Wednesday evenings 7-9 p.m. The address is: 91, Court Rd., Balsall Heath. (Tel: 440-1310.) There may be someone there earlier in the day to help with general advice, so it is worth calling if you can't make it on Wednesdays. They are understaffed at the moment so cannot give precise hours of opening.

## THE HOUSING CENTRE.

261-271 Stratford Road. (Tel: 773-4211) For advice on all types of housing problems-whether you are a council tenant, private tenant, or own your own house. Open Mon.-Fri. 9.00-4.00, Sat. 9.00-12.00. Go and see them whatever your problem-leaking roof; house too small; house going to be demolished; you want to buy a house and are having difficulties; etc. THIS CENTRE IS RUN BY BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL. ALL ADVICE IS FREE.



# PLAYGROUND



## TAKING STOCK

Of course we have all been very busy at the Playground since the last issue of the Heathan came out. For one thing we had the Christmas holidays and a host of special festive activities! We went Carol singing with the actors from Cannon Hill, and raised £16.44p towards the cost of our great Xmas Party which was held on Saturday 22nd December. (We also had a very good time singing and we hope it wasn't too much of a strain on those who were listening.) On New Year's Eve we had a 'seeing in' bonfire at the playground, and during the rest of the holiday lots of adults and children went on various trips. We went to the panto, the Lickey, a canal trip and had a swimming gala at Moseley Rd Baths.

### exciting things to do

As you can see from the photos we have not exactly been idle at other times. We have been delighted to get new and very efficient heating for the playground hut, and everyone has been able to play games do craft or painting, or simply sit and relax, in a warm comfortable atmosphere. (The Community Bingo on Tuesday nights has also benefited from this of course, and we would like to point out that you can save your own fuel by coming to share our warmth with us...and have a good time!) On this page you can also read about some exciting plans we have for the near future, again with our friends from Cannon Hill.

## Your holiday starts soon

We intend to plan some outings for the Easter holidays and will be glad to hear from anyone else who has suggestions for any trips. As usual we'll be looking forward to seeing all the local children at the playground over Easter - there will be plans for plenty to do and lots of fun. We hope there will be some for the parents too.

Rob and Rob.



7

## FUN

On Tuesday nights  
In spite of the cold,  
We all meet there -  
The young and the old.  
There's Bill and Ben  
And droopy drawers,  
Doctor's orders and  
On the loo.  
Let's get dirty and  
Two fat ladies.  
Let's be matey and  
On the floor,  
At the gate and  
Nearest the top.  
Clickety-click and  
Dirty knees. Two  
Little ducks and  
One alone.  
The Heavenly Choir and  
Top of the shop.  
Same both ways up.  
Half a century.  
What have we got?  
BINGO for all -  
So come along and  
HAVE A BALL!

MRS. V.A. THOMPSON (SHUSH!)



## Another special ....

Malvern St. Adventure Playground has booked EVERY SEAT at the theatre at Cannon Hill for Saturday March 23rd. On that day, two double decker buses (plus Rob, Rob and Dick) will take 200 kids and adults to watch the play, refreshments included, for FREE. This booking will cost £40., so how can it be free?

Two weeks before the actors' performance there will be a grand jumble sale (Clifton Road School has been hired for the occasion - March 9th, another Saturday.) In the weeks before the 9th we will be collecting jumble from as many Balsall Heathans as we can visit. In particular, on the morning of Saturday 23rd February the actors from Cannon Hill, the kids from the playground and other people will be collecting in the streets around the playground - in Brunswick Road, Clifton Road, Runcorn Rd., Ombersley Rd. and so on.

There are a lot of jobs left to do if the jumble sale and the trip down to Cannon Hill are to be a success. Above all two things are needed from readers of the Heathan: (1) JUMBLE - we will collect it if you let us know when and where. Or you can deliver it. Contact us at Malvern St. playground, or 120, St. Paul's Rd.

(2) CHILDREN AND ADULTS are wanted (!) - 200 of them - to go down to Cannon Hill to the play. Rob and Rob are making a list of bookings, so get YOUR NAME on that list as soon as possible.

APART from this ALL YOU NEED TO DO is come to the jumble sale and the play, and have a good time.



from  
the

# COMMUNITY SCHOOL



## LOCAL SCENE

What causes rubbish is that people are too lazy to walk to their dustbin, so they just throw it into the back yard of any old house. The rubbish is polluting our streets.

What can we do about it? Well, for instance, we could stop throwing cigarette papers on the floor - and just leave them in our pockets until we find a bin. Bins are only about 250 yards away from each other.

Perhaps rubbish is caused too because the dustmen failed to call, and your dustbin is full. We all make our own rubbish.

V.Doyle.

## Introduce us to a friend

He is tall, dark and handsome, with his black Afro-style hair. Also he is clean and smart, with his well-brushed teeth and polished shoes and neatly-pressed trousers. He loves music and is always singing. He's always on the scrounge, "Give us a fag Tom." Or he would be jumping around the room doing Kung Fu movements. When he is mean you can tell by the expression on his face he is loving inside - for example, he would turn his head and give a little smile. He likes to get his hands on money, sweets and fags.

A.McGee

## Lamp-Post

When you're away from it  
It looks like a huge one-eyed Cyclops.  
When it's alight  
It catches everything in its sight.  
It catches the shadow  
Of a cat running by.  
Or a glimpse  
Of someone shutting their curtains nearby.  
It's long and thin  
Like a nail or a pin.  
When it's night  
It shines very bright.  
When the night begins to die  
The lamp-post shuts its eye.

A.McGee.

## SAFETY

Most accidents are caused by carelessness. Cars park on the wrong side of the road, and park close together so that children cannot see cars coming when they cross and people in the cars cannot see the children. Police have been taking notice of the cars parked on the wrong side in my road. Children get knocked down too by running to the ice-cream van, and running when they see a friend over the road. Balsall Heath is the worst place in Birmingham for accidents - and I know how easy it is to get hit by a car because one hit me when I was small. Luckily I was not hurt much.

Jacqueline Johnson.

## CORPORATION BUS

I live on a Corporation Bus  
As many tramps do.  
Rusty wheels and dusty floors,  
I sleep on straw and old coats  
With the rats to keep me company.  
The floors are infested with tickets -  
Fourpenny's, Twopenny's.  
What kind of a life can I lead  
On a Corporation bus?

T.Doyle.

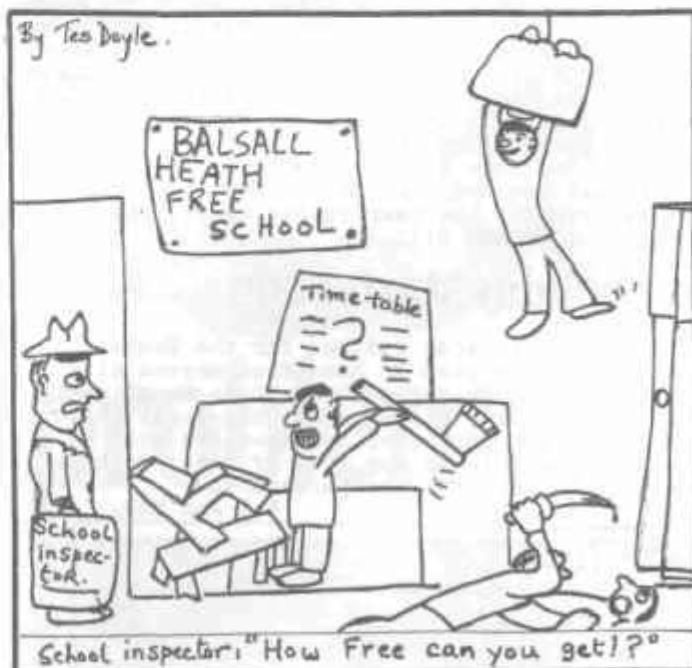
## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

As I walked leisurely down the street  
Wondering who next I might meet,  
Passed the houses small and dull  
The grey flats straight and tall.

Look at the soggy leaves lying on the ground!  
I picked up a dry one which I had found.  
As I looked round near and far  
I saw a dull-lit door ajar.

And there I saw a child's face pale and scared  
Wondering if to come out he dared  
Of the grey houses, identically paired.

T.Whiteley.



## Why

What is this planet?  
Why do I live on it?  
Where do I come from?  
Where is there to come from?  
And as a car zooms past me  
I ask myself  
"Where does it come from?"  
But then, I was never destined to know  
Why.

T.Doyle.



## LADYPOOL RD. YOUTH CLUB.

This Club meets on Friday evenings from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. for those twixt the ages of 9 and 14 at St. Barnabas Church Hall, Ladypool Rd. (Subs. are 2p each.)

### HOW WE STARTED.

Way back in April 1973 Jill Young met Jim Hodges, Richard Fisher and Linda Albert, and we decided to try and form a youth club at St. Barnabas, following a suggestion made by Margaret Selby at the Lane Neighbourhood Centre. Permission was obtained from the P.C.C. of St. Barnabas for the use of the hall, and we set out to raise funds. (Apparently clubs for children in this age group are not able to obtain L.E.A. grants.) The amount of £40 was raised by means of a jumble sale and things began. Apart from the usual activities like table tennis and darts, we were lucky to have a display of judo by the police judo team, trips to the swimming baths ice skating, sponsored walks, etc. At this time Linda left us, and Denise came to help. Jim Hodges, who originates from Llandrindod Wells (in Wales!) thought it would be a good idea to take the kids on holiday and set about the organisation of what turned out to be a very enjoyable and successful event. Committees were established in Birmingham and Llandod, and various families in Llandod, offered to accommodate one or more of our children in their homes. Consequently on August 25th some 20 children plus Jim, Richard, Jill (and baby) and Denise set forth for Wales. A reception party was waiting for them, and for the next week the people of Llandod just took over. We went on trips to the sea, the Elan valley, a football match, a treasure hunt, visits to farms, Builth cattle market, and many more.

We now have an average turnout of about 25 a week at our club evenings, and had a great party at Christmas.

If you'd like to come and join in on a Friday night, as a member or a helper, do please just turn up. We'll be very glad to see you!

Jill Young.

## SANDFORD HELP & ACTION CENTRE.

### Mums and Babies Group.

Are you a Mum with a baby under 2½ years old? Would you like to meet others in the same position? Then come along and join us at 73, Sandford Rd (off Church Rd.) on Tuesdays with Jill, Anne, Phil, Rosemarie and the children, 2.15-4.00 p.m. Thursdays with Jill, Diane, Carol and Pip, and again the little ones from 10.15-12.00 noon. Have a cup of coffee while the children play together, and phone 449-6714 for more information.

### Monkeynuts.

This is the club for juniors at 73, Sandford Rd. It meets on Friday evenings from 7.00 pm.-8.00pm. Its run by Margaret Hindley. As space is limited we cant take too many more, but there is room for some new members ages about 7-12 years.

### Babysitting Scheme.

We are trying to get this off the ground-the basic idea being that someone can obtain a sitter for a small sum of money, part of which goes into the S.H.A.C. funds for expenses. We are NOT in operation to assist people yet, but if you would be prepared to volunteer to babysit please contact either Jill Young (449-6714) or Margaret Hindley (449-3819) Until we have a pool of reliable sitters things cant begin. So can you help?

ADDRESS OF S.H.A.C.: 73, SANDFORD RD.

## FILMS

Your Guide To Films Coming to the Piccadilly Cinema, Stratford Road. (By G. Amoo)

17.2.74 for 7 Days. Clint Eastwood stars in 'Magnum Force'. A great film follow-up to 'Dirty Harry', which has a X certificate. A young police officer fights subversive elements in the force.

24.2.74 for 7 Days. David Essex and Rosemary Leach star in 'That'll Be The Day'. A really good rock and roll film with plenty of pretty girls. Certificate AA. WITH 'The Man Who Haunted Himself'. Roger Moore, that great James Bond actor, star's in this film, which is quite a good horror story.

## Royal Wedding

BY OUR REPORTER ON THE SPOT - ANNETTE TULL.

On Tuesday 13th my Nan and I left Birmingham at 6.30 p.m. and arrived in London at 8.45. We took a taxi to Buckingham Palace, then we went down the Mall and sat on the pavement till about 9.15 p.m. There were hundreds of cars and taxis going up and down the Mall, all the people were waving to us and some were laughing.

### Not So Easy

At 11.30 my Nan went off to try and get some fish and chips. She couldn't find anywhere, so she stopped a taxi and he took her to a shop, waited for her to be served and brought her back. He only charged her 45p - he was a very nice young man, and when he passed again he tooted his horn and asked if we were O.K.

### Bed breakfast and no bill

Just after midnight it started raining, so Nanny took a workman's tarpaulin and made a tent by the barricade on the edge of the pavement. I got into my sleeping bag and went to sleep. About 3-o'clock in the morning a group of young people from St. Mungo's Community Trust came round with a caravan and gave everyone a cup of hot soup. It warmed us up as it was very cold indeed. I kept going for little walks to warm me up, then I went to sleep again. About 7.30 a.m. St. Mungo's came again with hot tea for us all. This was all free - thank you St. Mungo's Trust!

### invasion

We then folded up my sleeping bag and tidied ourselves up. By this time there were a lot more people arriving. There were hundreds of police who were all around us, and a lot of St. John's Ambulance Brigade people. The Guardsmen then came and lined the route, which was closed to traffic at 9.30.

### BEAUTIFUL

It was very exciting when the Duke and Duchess of Kent and their children arrived with their children at the Palace, followed by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, who was very beautiful. Just after this the procession started from the Palace. There were lots of Horseguards who looked very splendid in their uniforms, and their horses were also decorated with sheepskin rugs on their saddles - some were white and some were black. The Queen, Queen Mother, Prince of Wales, Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon, the Dukes and Duchesses and all their children, were all in lovely horse-drawn carriages, and Mr. and Mrs. Phillips and their daughter were there as well. Everyone was dressed in beautifully-coloured clothes and lovely hats, and all waved to us as they went by. Then Princess Anne and her father came by, accompanied by Horse Guards. She looked very beautiful and happy and smiled and waved as she passed us by.

### Change of Scene

We had someone in the crowd who had a radio, and we all heard the service and sang hymns with them. The procession then came back along the Mall, everyone cheered Mark and Anne, and all the others in the Royal Families. We were not allowed to move for a little while as the police on horseback were all across the road, but when they let us move, everyone went towards the Palace. If you wanted to go the other way the crowd was too big for you to turn round, so you just had to move with the crowd. Princess Anne and Mark came out on the balcony and everyone cheered them, then the Queen and everyone joined them and everyone kept cheering for a long time.

### The Happy Traveller

When this was all over my Nan took me to stay the night with some Nigerian friends, Mr. and Mrs. Uwonogho, who live at Peckham. They did not know we were coming, but they made us very welcome. I was very tired indeed by now, but it was all so lovely that I would go and see it all over again.

### ABOUT THE HEATHAN.

There isn't much room for the Editorial this time - but we're glad about this, because so many people have helped by producing drawings, articles, photos, etc. Especial thanks to our friend Liz Mackie (who drew the front page cartoon) and to those who gave us the information for the accident article. Photos are by Mike, with Tom Whiteley and Vincent Doyle. The crossword is by Gill Southwell. We NEED HELP with distribution of the paper, collection of advertisements, reporting, drawing, and in fact EVERYTHING for the next issues. We welcome articles on any subject of local interest. Anyone who would like to help in any way please contact us at 120, St. Paul's Rd. (440-4376). The newspaper is organised entirely by the Community School and is financed entirely by sales and the advertisements.



# Service to advertisers

Rates: £1 per column  
inch for display ads.  
Apply to the Heathen  
120, St. Paul's Road.  
Tel: 440-4375.  
Personal attention.

## AUTOSPEED



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WE HAVE EVERYTHING  
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AND SEE DON OR DILIP  
ANY DAY OF THE WEEK.

### TWO MORE COMPETITIONS.

- 1) Make up a crossword, with local interest for Balsall Heathans. We will pay £1 for each one we publish.
- 2) We are searching for OLD PHOTOGRAPHS of Balsall Heath. Turn out your attics & cellars! We will pay 50p. for each one we publish and will return your photos unharmed. Send to The Heathen, 120 St Paul's Road, Balsall Heath, B.12.

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EVERY TUESDAY -  
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BY THE MUMS FOR THE MUMS \* AND DADS:

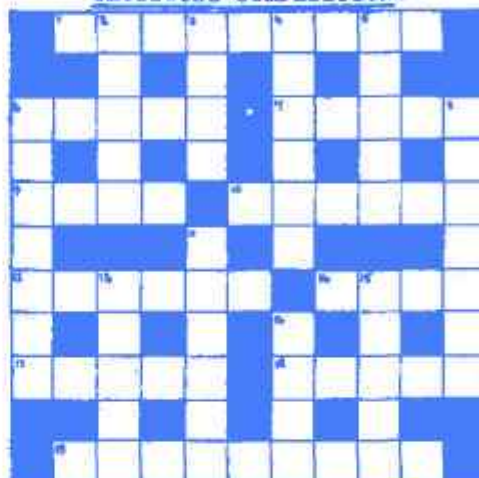
## COMMUNITY

DOORS OPEN 7.30. **BINGO** EYES DOWN 8.00

GREAT PRIZES FLYER, SNOWBALL, RAFFLE, ETC.  
5p IN and PENSIONERS FREE  
1p a game

In aid of the Happy House and PLAYGROUND.  
Bring this ad. for a FREE game. Refreshments.

### CROSSWORD COMPETITION.



#### ACROSS

1. No ordinary playground in Malvern Street.
6. CITY! - In a state of depression
7. A 'pleasant' one in Balsall Heath Road!
9. You'll be pleased to rub your hands with this!
10. Dr. Foster stepped in one of these.
12. A teaser - to do with bonnets & chocolate eggs!

#### DOWN

2. Card talk for the 2.
3. You could make this other something out of "eels".
4. Gentlemen, please. You hear this in most pubs at 10.30. (4-2)
5. .... (See 4 down) - when everybody rushes for another one of these!
6. Large business transaction that turns out to be a bit of a flop? (3-4)
8. Baa Baa Blacksheep's got a bag of wool for the boy who cries down here. (3-4)

14. A gal. In the swimming competition?
17. Top of the league, and what a record.
18. Becks & aristocrats both have one of these.
19. A road between St. Pauls and Clifton.

#### DOWN (Continued).

11. What the teacher teaches and the pupil learns.
13. Avoid trees, when you're driving the car.
15. 'Act it' out on the top floor of the house?
16. Try "weat" for a tasty Irish one.

£1. will be paid to the sender of the first correct solution opened on MARCH 21st. SEND TO The Heathen (Crossword) 120 St. Pauls Rd., Balsall Heath, B.12.

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