

# the Heathan

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Balsall Heath Community School.

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## CARNIVAL - TIME!

### FREE PROGRAMME INSIDE

**BALSALL HEATH'S FIRST GREAT CARNIVAL WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY July 2nd.** The free programme inside has a lucky number which could win you a big prize. **MORE** prizes to be won by kids in the **Poster-Colouring Competition.** The **Carnival Clown** will be touring all the streets, spotting winners in windows - so get those posters up **NOW!** And the **Heathan** joins the competition fun! Take your copy to the **Carnival** - answer our **Roving Reporter's** easy question - win a prize. **HAVE FUN!**



The Carnival, which has been planned and organised by just about every local group, club and organisation in the area, will take the form of an International Country Fair. Local schools, churches, playgroups, nurseries, police, youth organisations, etc., etc. are all taking part. There will be a grand procession round the whole neighbourhood, with, of course, a competition for the best float. In the afternoon the Fair will be held at the top of Clifton and Runcorn Roads, and there will be sideshows, displays, sports, and a multitude of stalls. In the evening two great Socials will take place at Tindal St. School and at St. Paul's Hall. The organisers believe that this is the first time ever that Balsall Heath has had its very own carnival - already many people hope that it can become an annual event, outdoing all its rivals in Birmingham. The Heathan wishes everyone a happy Carnival!

### ROUND TABLE VAN GIFT.

Pictured above is the Vice-Chairman of Moseley Round Table, presenting a sparkling blue minibus to staff and pupils of the Balsall Heath Community School, who received it on behalf of the School, St. Paul's Nursery and Malvern St. Adventure Playground. The members of the Round Table collected money for the 'bus in various ways, and were heartily cheered by the kids for their kind efforts.

### LORD MAYOR'S VISIT.

On Thursday 23rd June, the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Mrs. Freda Cocks will be visiting St. Paul's Nursery, the Community School and Malvern St. Play Centre.



## Childminders' Adviser

Mr. Rod Parry, one of our Home-School Liaison Teachers, has been appointed Deputy Head of Arden School in Sparkhill. He came to Tindal in 1974 and it is a real tribute to his very hard work over the last three years, and to him personally, that he should have achieved this success. He takes up his new post in September. Last, but not least, there is another new face in the School - that of Mrs. E. Turner, who is our new Childminder adviser. Her job is to link up with childminders in the area and to offer help and advice. So if there is anyone who would like a visit, please let us know, as Mrs. Turner is very keen to build up as many contacts as possible.

Rob Hughes, Headmaster.

## Wild Life

Earlier this year, a party of children from Tindal visited Bell Heath Country Studies Centre. There were 35 of us altogether, spending a week studying the local area. Our excursion into the wilds of the countryside was to Farley Woods, where we counted trees and tried to avoid stepping on the sprouting bluebells. Although the weather was miserable, we were not - we enjoyed the bracing fresh air. Well, most of us did. Well, I did, anyway. The next day was a minor heatwave and we spent a lot of time fishing in Sling Pool. The afternoon was reserved for a trip to Chapman's Hill Farm, where we saw new-born lambs, pigs and cows. We also had a chance to hand-feed some tame sheep. The last expedition was to Hartlebury Castle Museum, which we had to ourselves, probably because of the rain, and we spent an enjoyable afternoon looking at old farm wagons and local relics. As always, time went too quickly, and we were soon back at school. We will look back on this trip as one of our most successful - only two children fell in the pond!

Nigel Baynes.

## New Head Writes:

I could hardly refuse an invitation from the Editor of The Heathan to write an article about myself but I must admit, I'm not really sure what I can say. Especially as I am taking over from Alex Hughes, who did so much to make Tindal the school that it is. "How do I follow that?" is my first reaction, so I hope all those people who have contact with the school will bear with me while I try to pick up the threads as quickly as I can. Certainly I would like to wish Mr. Hughes well in his new job over at Woodgate Valley and to thank him for leaving behind a school that anyone would be glad to inherit. Incidentally, there is no truth in the rumour that the Education Committee were so pleased with his work that they chose a Head with the same name in order to ensure maximum continuity!

## Back Home

As a schoolboy, I attended the old Camp Hill school down at Bordesley. Little did I think then, as I marched with my friends up to the Moseley Rd. baths, back in the 50's, that eventually I would be involved with the parents and children of Balsall Heath to such an extent. Because although I am new to Tindal, I have been teaching in the area since 1970 as the deputy head of Heath Mount School. I started teaching in Birmingham in 1965. First of all, in a junior school in Great Barr, and then on to an old Victorian primary school in Aston. But originally I had set out on a very different career, because when I left school I went into the Merchant Navy and spent nearly six years sailing between the West Indies, Central America and Europe. Somehow though, the call of the classroom proved greater than the call of the sea, and so I ended up in a College of Education in Bath, and eventually on to teach in Birmingham.

## Lost History

Many people will know already that the school suffered a bad fire just before the Easter holidays. Had it not been for the prompt action of the police, the Fire Brigade, and Mrs. Pemberton, our caretaker, things would have been much worse. As it was, the head teacher's room and a stockroom nearby were badly damaged. Sadly, the fire also destroyed the old logbooks, dating back to 1880 when the school first opened.

## Asian Afternoon

Tindal School was a hive of industry on Sunday May 8th as the ladies of the English class decorated the hall and community rooms for their Asian afternoon. The afternoon was geared to good food, music and dancing, and a chance to meet and make friends. Everyone who came was asked to bring a plate of food, with the recipe, and by the time the last plate arrived, the laden table looked like a banquet! The air was heavy with the scent of joss sticks, candles were lit, and there was a beautiful display of draped saris and ornaments. There was also some superb talent present, with Asian dancers, a sitar player, a vocalist and a tabla player. For a few hours the school was transformed. Many children came with their parents, and it was most gratifying that fathers and brothers came and stayed to enjoy themselves.



## Rhyl Expedition

All the Tindal infants are off to Rhyl on July 14 for a day by the sea. For many of the children it will be their first trip with the school anywhere and certainly their first trip to the seaside, and first train journey. They leave at 8.30 a.m. and return tired but happy at 9.30 p.m. Fingers crossed for a sunny day!

## Farmed Out

Tindal Nursery is off again - this time to Dodford Holiday farm, near Bromsgrove. Let's hope the 15 children and 4 staff have fine weather and can take full advantage of the paddling pool - clothes to pack include bathing costumes (and wellies, just in case). Attractions include fishing, kites and picnics. Another happy week coming up.

## Jubilee fun...

Party clothes were the order of the day for Friday June 3rd, which was Tindal nursery children's Jubilee party. There was dancing round the maypole, races, and a picnic, all in the playground.

## ...And more

The Playgroup children also had their Jubilee party, and for days before hand kept going home covered in Red, White and Blue paint. They made all the decorations themselves. Mums helped too, by raising money by raffles, jumble sales and a swap-shop. Bo-Bo the Clown went to the party, along with all the playgroup children, their brothers and sisters, mums and dads, and our 'adopted' Grannies (ladies from Elsie Jones' old people's club.) This party was on Saturday 4th June.

We are always ready to welcome new Mums, babies and toddlers to our Mother and Baby Group meeting on Monday mornings and Wednesday afternoons. The group is very friendly and informal. Mums can relax and chat to friends over a cup of tea (none cheaper at 3p!) while the children play happily and safely with a wide variety of toys. So, toddlers bring your Mums to TINDAL.....

Wendy Braund, Playgroup Leader.

## New West Indian Association

During May, the St. Paul's West Indies Association which has been formed by members and friends of St. Paul's Church held a Social evening at the Nursery Centre. One of the principal organisers, Mr. A. Greaves, the new church warden for St. Paul's, modestly told our reporter that he was very pleased at the large attendance. There were certainly plenty of people to enjoy the food, drink and good music. The Reverend John Cooper thought that the Social had been one of the most enjoyable he had ever been to, and he hoped that this was only the beginning of a lively new Association.



Members of the Balsall Heath ladies' football team, in one of their three matches, to date, versus Sparkbrook ladies. Referee is Cllr. O'Keefe.

## LOCAL HOUSING CO-OP

The Balsall Heath Housing Co-operative was formed in January of this year by a group of residents and the workers in the Balsall Heath Association. The Co-op will operate in the Balsall Heath Housing Action Area and the Cannon Hill General Improvement Area. The residents wish to own collectively, and control, their own homes. Most of the members live in privately rented accommodation, and have experienced great difficulty in persuading their landlords to do either basic repairs or improvements. A number of owner-occupiers have also shown interest, although not all of them will necessarily wish to sell their homes to the Co-operative.

### FUNDS COMING

In March, the Co-op was registered as a Housing Association and an application has been made to the Housing Corporation for the necessary funds to purchase the houses the Co-op intends to improve. The Housing Corporation (which is funded by the Dept. of the Environment) has promised to make available, initially, sufficient funding for 20 houses. The total number of houses to be purchased and improved by the Co-op has been limited to 50, in an effort to keep the Co-op small and easy to manage.

### FIRST HOUSES

New Hestia Housing Association has agreed to act as a service agency - that is, to buy and improve the houses in the name of the Co-op. It is hoped that the first houses will be bought this month. The progress to date has been very encouraging, therefore, and membership has increased month by month. The members have put a lot of effort into making it a success, and are aware that there are still many more hurdles to overcome.

### YOU CAN JOIN

If you are interested in joining the Co-op, a fee of £1 is charged for membership - plus a willingness to attend meetings regularly. If you would like more information, please contact either: Mrs. Janet Miah (Chairman), or Bernie Masterson, at Balsall Heath Association, 91, Court Rd. Tel: 440-1310.

By Bernie Masterson.

## Not Funny

A not-at-all-funny thing happened to one of our reporters the other day when he was out looking for a good story. There happened to be no-one else at home. An observant neighbour noticed a strange young visitor behaving in an odd fashion near the reporter's house. The neighbour called the local police. The police were so quick in answering the call that the unwanted visitor had only had time to force his way round to the back of the house, and had not had time to get inside. The neighbour quickly pointed out the strange visitor to the police, who just as quickly arrested him. It turns out that the mysterious visitor is one of four youths who have been responsible for several break-ins in the past few weeks. He and his friends will be appearing in court very shortly. No doubt they will be suitably dealt with. But the moral is: if it had not been for the watchfulness and prompt action of our reporter's neighbour, and the speed of the police, the group would probably have broken into still more homes. It could have been YOUR home, or YOUR neighbour's. Keep your eyes open and report suspicious actions or happenings to the police, and let's reduce the number of unwanted visitors.



## DESPICABLE CRIME

In our last issue, the *Heath* printed a story about Mrs. Alice Humpage ('Dolly'), of Cheddar Rd., which had a happy ending. Unfortunately, since then there's another nasty twist to her story. Dolly has become the victim of what the police describe as 'a particularly despicable and heartless act of crime'. Dolly has been robbed of her life savings of £212. She was visited one evening by a bogus police officer, dressed in ordinary clothes. Perhaps because she was expecting some of her friends to call that evening, as they always do, or perhaps because she had recently been visited by some genuine police officers who were checking on old people in the area, Dolly was taken in by the man. (The same man apparently approached at least one other old lady in the area, but she did not hand over any money to him.)

### BOGUS 'POLICEMAN'

The bogus 'policeman' claimed that he was going round checking on old folk in the area as part of his job, because there were some con men going about tricking people into handing over money. He asked Dolly if she had any money, and said that if she did it would be best if she handed it over to the police to take care of it for her. He said that he had not brought his car with him, as he had walked from the Station. (His lies included claiming that he came from Edward Rd.) He told Mrs. Humpage that he would take her money with him to the Station, collect his car, and come back in it to fetch her to the station to get a receipt!

### NO NEW FURNITURE NOW

Of course, Dolly was very worried about keeping her money in the house, and did hand it over to

the phony policeman. She had been saving for years, and intended going out with her friends Mrs. McKane and Mrs. Bird to get things for her new home - a T.V., a carpet and a bed. She had not been able to go sooner because she had been poorly. That was why the money was in the house in the first place.

### BE WARNED

After the man had been gone half an hour and had not returned, Dolly began to be worried and contacted the police station. To date, the police are still working on the case, but have not yet made an arrest. Of course the man was nothing whatsoever to do with the Force. Mrs. Humpage was able to give a very good description of the con man, so there is a probability that sooner or later he will be caught. In the meantime, the police would like to hear immediately from anyone who has visits from crooks of this kind. They warn us all to be on our guard against any person claiming to be some sort of official, but having no identification. Every police officer has a warrant card. If one calls at your home, for any reason, ask to see it. If there isn't one - don't let him in. Other officials also have identity cards, wherever they are from. If in doubt, don't let ANYONE in, but phone the organisation they say they represent and ask about them, and request identification. No-one who really is an official minds this - it's just good sense. If anyone is behaving suspiciously then tell the police - you may save someone like Dolly from being done great harm. Last note of caution - unfortunately it also makes good sense to have a chain put on your door, so that no-one can get in if you don't want them to. **REALLY!**

By Vera Gilbert.

## BROOK OFFERS YOU



**Free Contraception  
& Help with Problems  
Pregnancy Testing £1  
Infection Testing £3**



- Edgbaston • Tel: 021 455 0491  
9 York Road Edgbaston  
Birmingham B16 9HX
- City Centre • Tel: 021 643 5341  
8/10 Albert Street  
Birmingham B4 7UD
- Handsworth • Tel: 021 554 7553  
102 Hamstead Road  
Birmingham B19 1DG
- Aston • Tel: 021 359 3611  
Student Health Centre  
University of Aston  
Birmingham B4 7ET

## HELP



**I AM PREGNANT**  
if you think you're  
pregnant and you  
need help don't  
delay talk to BPAS  
a non-profit making  
registered Charitable  
Trust  
**FREE PREGNANCY TESTS**

## BPAS

**British Pregnancy Advisory Service,**  
First Floor, Guildhall Buildings,  
Navigation Street, Birmingham, B2 4BT.  
Telephone: 021-643 1461.



## THANK YOU, ROB

Rob and Myra have now both left the Playground, and I'm sure we all wish them the very best of luck in the future. Many thanks to all those who put into the collection organised by Phyllis McGee and June Stone. From it, we bought Rob a silver tankard, engraved with the words, "To Rob, for five years of dedicated service at Malvern St." We also gave him a bottle of whisky to christen it! We bought Myra a big box of chocolates. As Rob said, it made him feel as if all his efforts had been appreciated.

## HALLO, DAVE

We've got a new Playleader now, Dave Swingle, who has taken over Rob's job. He is already hard at work. Before long, in mid-June, a third worker will be coming to join us at the Playground. He is called Chris Leach, he comes from Birmingham, so he ought to be at home among us, and everyone who has seen him so far reckons he's the image of Rob Wheway. (It is hard to imagine that there could be two people like that, but there you are - playleaders need to go round in disguise sometimes!)



Playleaders Dave Swingle and Sheila Rushforth.

## PROGRESS

The playground has now had its Spring Clean, and big improvements are in progress. Inside the hut, the old kitchen wall is coming down to make a much larger room for arts and crafts. There will be pottery, sewing, woodwork, etc. The kitchen is being moved into the back room, and being done up to make a fully-equipped cookery centre, with a hatchway through to the outside so that in summer we can serve drinks and so on to the play area. We are arranging a new sitting area indoors, with a small library, plants, and perhaps fish. The whole building now has a new coat of paint, with softboard to display the children's work.

## ALSO RUN

Outside, some new areas have been grassed over. A garden area is being planned near the houses, to grow plants and vegetables and flowers. There will also be an animal run for rabbits and other small animals. With the help of Mr. Moran and Mr. Waring we've taken some of the telegraph poles down, and moved them to the hilly area, where all the building will be in the future. For the toddlers, we're fencing off the sandpit area and putting up blackboards. We are also putting in some benches, so that you parents have somewhere to put your feet up when you bring the kids round!

## LEND A HAND

As you can see, we've got lots of work on our hands so if you have a couple of hours to spare, why not pop down and lend a hand one evening? We would be very pleased to see you, and we think you'll be impressed with what we've done so far. Do come and see us and meet the new leaders at Malvern St.

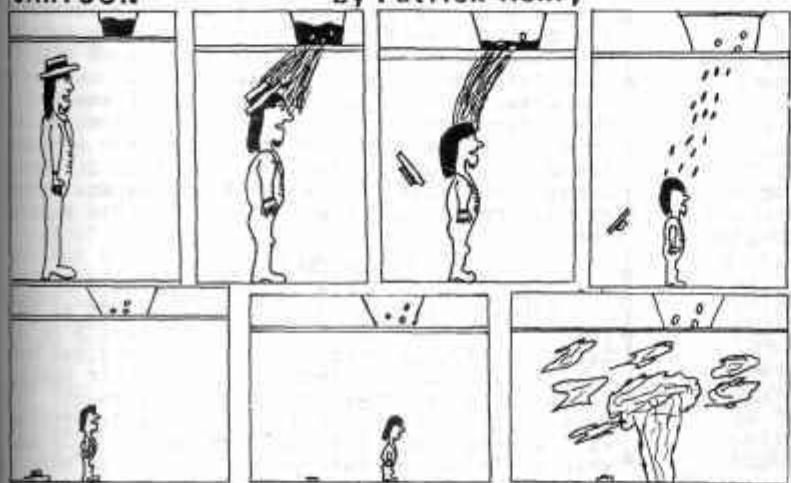
## BETTER SAFE

We hope it wasn't too disappointing for the kids not to be able to play on the playground for a couple of weeks, while we got on with the changes and renovations, but we feel sure that the alterations will enable them to make better use of the play area, and to take part in a greater number of activities in a clean and safe place.

Sheila Rushforth.

## CARTOON

by Patrick Henry



## SUMMER FAYRE!

AT

## CALTHORPE SCHOOL.

(IN LEOPOLD ST.)

ON SATURDAY 25th JUNE

2 p.m.

Stalls Sideshows Bingo & Food

# UP YOUR STREET



## JUBILEE-ATION!

Our Up Your Street reporters have had a lot of fun in the last few weeks running their own Jubilee celebrations competition. We have decided to award a Star Prize in all categories to Beach Avenue (off Stoney Lane), which, although a very small street, pulled off a very large celebration. Our photograph, above, doesn't do justice to the colour and variety of the decorations that festoon the Avenue, but you can get an idea of just how attractive it looks. As Mr. Thomas of number 11 says, "It's a pity it all has to come down sometime. But we're going to keep it, and we expect we'll get a chance to put it all up again before too long." He and his wife made all the bunting, which is of a most unusual and pretty design. The Beach Avenue celebrations, which included a party for the kids on the 7th, were of a truly international flavour, for the street has householders who have come to the area from all over the world.

### IN STITCHES

The biggest surprise of the party (in more ways than one) was provided by Mr. A.M. Chauhan, who hails from Bombay, originally, and made for the occasion a giant Union Jack. As he said to us, "I kept it a secret from everyone, because I wanted it to be a happy surprise for the people we have come to live amongst." It certainly was - even the police cars kept stopping to look, as the party was in progress, and everyone congratulated Mr. Chauhan on his stamina, as he waved the 11-foot by 9-foot flag non-stop for three hours. Mr. Chauhan is a trained tailor, so at least he had no trouble with dropped stitches - but he is also a frustrated man. His other secret ambition is to make the biggest Union Jack in the world. We thought he was joking, but he is in deadly earnest. The only thing stopping him is lack of cash - he reckons he needs 1800 yards of red, white and blue material, which is quite a bit, of course. If anyone would like to sponsor him in this gallant attempt to get into the Guinness Book of Records, there are a lot of people in Beach Avenue to testify to his grim determination with the needle.

### PLACE OF HONOUR

It wasn't only the kids who enjoyed the Beach Avenue party - a place of honour went to Mrs. Pettigrew (Senior) of number 12, who is 90 years old. It's a pity that there are always some miserable creatures about who have to try and spoil other people's efforts - our prize for sheer piggery goes to whoever stole the big flag you can see in the photo, on the end house. They tried to steal another, too, but were prevented by Mrs. Thomas. Still, it takes a lot more than that to keep Beach Avenue down! Here's health to you all, and a lot more happy times to come!

### POCKETFULS OF FUN

Our next prize goes to Oldfield Rd., and especially to Mrs. Holwell, for unusual initiative in the pursuit of the festive spirit. Mrs. Holwell lives at number 23, and one day while sewing anorak pockets, she thought to herself, "What splendid flags these would make!" The result was about a quarter of a mile of bunting gaily fluttering up and down Oldfield Rd. We are not giving away any terrible secrets, by the way, as Mrs. Holwell's kind and patriotic boss DOES know, and thanks are due to Mr. Kent of 312, Ladypool Rd. for adding to the jollity of the Balsall Heath scene by giving his anorak pockets to the good cause. Well done, too, to Minnie, who helped with the sewing! (Our only note of anxiety here is the thought of all those anoraks without pockets.....)

### A ROYAL SALUTE

Still on a note of jubilation - one of the many people in Balsall Heath flying colours for the Queen this June is Mrs. Sadie Evans of Lilac Avenue, off Runcorn Rd. Sadie does her celebrating in a big way, right in front of members of the Royal Family! First of all, on the morning of June 12th, Mrs. Evans was at Horse Guards' Parade in London. She was one of about a thousand standard bearers of the Royal British Legion, from all over England and Wales and overseas, who paraded in front of His Royal Highness Prince Charles. That's not all. The same afternoon, Mrs. Evans and an even larger number of other standard bearers paraded in front of the Queen and Prince Philip at Windsor Castle. Sadie was distinguished, not just by being a standard bearer for the parades, but by being the ONLY woman standard bearer there! Her branch of the Legion, is the only all ex-service women's group. She had a brand-new uniform for the occasion and so she looked even smarter than usual.

### LOCAL APPEAL

Back in Balsall Heath, Mrs. Evans has not been idle (is she ever?), about the Silver Jubilee. She has been helping with the Jubilee Appeal Fund 'to help young people to help others'. It has been difficult to get the Appeal going in the area, she says, because people have misunderstood the motives behind it. The Appeal is not to help the Queen, but to raise money which will be used for young people to give helpful service to the areas in which they live. Mrs. Evans feels that there are two groups in the area which deserve special congratulations for their work for the Jubilee Fund. They are: the 59th Birmingham Scout Group, under their Cub Mistress, Mrs. Johnson of Runcorn Rd., and the 220th (St. Mary's Moseley) Scout Group.

### FLAG DAYS

Another of our (purely honorary, perhaps we'd better mention at this late stage!) awards of merit goes to all those shopkeepers, especially in the Ladypool Rd., who shinned up lamp-posts, and hung dangerously out of windows adding their bunting to the Brighten-Up-Balsall Heath movement. It is good to know that a lot of these decorations will appear again for the Carnival on July 2nd, when their owners have promised to lend them.





ABOVE: MANY HANDS HAVE MADE LIGHT WORK OF CATERING FOR THE PARTY. BELOW: SOME OF THE KIDS.



## STREETS AHEAD OF THE REST

Finally, our second Star Prize goes to Sunny Avenue, which held a street party of enormous and elastic proportions. It seems to have been crashed by a few other streets who didn't get round to organising their own parties! The Avenue was enthusiastically decorated, and neighbours pooled money and skills to give youngsters and senior citizens a day to remember. It was wet and windy on the morning of the Great Day. Not to be outdone, the organisers, Mrs. Smythe, Mrs. McGee, Mrs. Stone and Mrs. Wareing, switched the venue to St. Paul's Hall, and all hands were put to erecting the tables, laying out the food and arranging the disco. By 2 p.m. over 150 children were in their attractively-decorated places. A corner of the Hall was filled by the old people, and the parents scuttled about serving, filling and re-filling plates and mugs. The mountain of food all eaten it was time for the clowns. First, Mr. Inglis. Then Sheila Rushforth, followed by Mr. Inglis' family show. Dave had lost his voice, so he did his silent act. Then came the music, the disco and dancing, and the drinks for the adults. No-one wanted to leave, but the Hall had to be cleared and prepared for the special Jubilee Bingo. All lent a hand with the cleaning, and then either lingered for the Bingo or continued their celebrations at home or in the pub. Neighbours met and made friends who had never spoken to each other before and all were thrilled by the festive atmosphere they had created. Everyone wanted to know when the next street party would take place. "We can't wait another 25 years!" said Mrs. Byron. "Why not in the summer?" said Mr. Bassett. It was a truly marvellous day - thanks to the Jubilee and Mrs. Smythe, Mrs. McGee, Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Wareing and many many others.

In the last issue of the Heathan we reported on the formation of Balsall Heath Residents' Action Group. (B.R.A.G.) Since then, the organisers have been busy, having held two regular committee meetings and another public meeting. The action group are working in co-operation with the local Urban Renewal team (under Alan Shrimpton). Much progress has already been made in ironing out some of the problems with the 'Area Plan' for the improvement of Balsall Heath. One of the project team, Ian Dally, has worked closely with the action group, and taken the wishes of residents into account at all stages of preparing the plan.

## KEEN IMPROVERS

In the forefront of activities for the action group are two well-known local residents. The Secretary of B.R.A.G. is Pat Priestman, who has worked for the improvement of Balsall Heath through street committees, residents' groups, and planning meetings for many years. The Chairman of B.R.A.G. is Mr. 'Wally' Rose, who, as everyone knows, can be found behind the counter of 'Barnwell Stores', which he runs with the help of his wife. Wally spent over 40 years in the building trade before taking over the shop. Having lived all his life in Balsall Heath, he has a strong affection for our area. He has also seen at first hand just what builders can do when they start 'improving' an area. As he said to our reporter, he didn't want to see Balsall Heath "slaughtered like some areas have been". Both Wally and Pat have taken an active part in the preparation of the plan to improve the area. This plan is nearing the stage where it can be submitted to the City, for implementation. But there are still a few minor, but important details to discuss with residents. Noise levels from local factories, shopping facilities, cleared sites, car parking, etc. are still being sorted out.

## AREA CARETAKER?

A great deal has been achieved in the past 18 months. What of the future? The work of BRAG will not stop with the Area Plan. The committee are investigating the possibility of an 'Area Caretaker', who would be employed by the Housing Dept., to work in co-operation with the action group to carry out a number of environmental and household repairs. Sounds like a great idea, to help keep the improvements going!

## INTERESTED?

Like all the neighbourhood projects in Balsall Heath, BRAG could always do with more help. Why not have a word with Pat or Wally, or pop into the B.H.A. office in Court Rd.

Photo: Ian, Pat and Wally at a public meeting.



## WEDDING AT CENTRE



Our reporter was fortunate in being one of the guests to be invited to the wedding of Shabbir Husein, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Badrudin Yusufali Vanat, and Mumtaz, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hasunali Rajabali. The ceremony was held at St. Paul's Centre in April and was conducted in the Moslem manner. Both bride and groom were in traditional dress. The wedding was attended by several hundred people, and as our photograph shows, it was hard to find a spare inch of space in the hall. Just how everybody managed to get served for the luncheon which followed the ceremony remains a mystery, but a mountain of plates containing delicious food was somehow distributed, and a very happy time was had by all. It was a really colourful and cheerful occasion, and our reporter felt very privileged to take part in it.

## YOUR LOCAL

Are YOU a member of your local library? (The one with the clock tower, next to the swimming baths!) Anyone can join! It's absolutely FREE! Just bring along something which shows your name and address. We have a large range of books available for loan to both adults and children. Our sections include:

- NOVELS - romances, westerns, crime stories, science fiction.....
- BOOKS ON SPECIAL SUBJECTS - cookery, handicrafts, sport, travel, cars.....
- TEENAGERS SECTION.....
- CHILDREN'S LIBRARY - including picture books for the very young.....
- BOOKS IN URDU, GUJERATI, HINDI, AND PUNJABI.....
- LARGE PRINT BOOKS FOR THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED.

Come in and have a look round. Don't let the look of the outside of the building put you off. It's comfortable inside. Books are expensive these days, so why not borrow some from us? We would like to see you.

## HISTORY OF US!

During Carnival week, June 27th to July 2nd, we will be holding an EXHIBITION OF LOCAL HISTORY. This will have photographs and maps of Balsall Heath in the last century, and other items of interest - for example, copies of the Balsall Heath and Moseley News 1881.

There will be activities for the children during the summer holidays. We are beginning with a story-telling session, using film-strips and slides on 26th July at 2.30 p.m. At this story-hour our other summer events will be announced. Everyone is welcome to any of our activities.

There is an English Class for Asian ladies on Fridays 9.30-11.30 a.m.

We hope to meet you soon at the Library!  
Geoff, Pat, Devinder, Mohammed and Mandy.

# CHILD BENEFIT

If you are a Mum or Dad, then here's something you should know. The 'Family Allowance' and the 'Child Interim Benefit' have both been replaced by the new Child Benefit Scheme. This extends the allowance system to cover the FIRST child, as well as others in the family, and is paid at the rate of £1. This is normally paid to the mother, but it's NOT an extra £1 in the purse for the ordinary working family. Income tax allowances for children under 11 have been stopped, and those for children over 11 are reduced. On average this means that working fathers get 70p a week or so stopped in tax from their pay. So the average family gains by only 30p a week or so on the new system. Families who are already receiving a Family Allowance (those with 2 or more children) will automatically get the new benefit. But if you have a ORANGE coloured allowance book then you should go to the local Social Security Office to have it adjusted straight away.

## COSTLY COMPLICATIONS

For single parent families the rate is £1-50 for the first child, but it is paid with TWO books. The first is the child benefit of £1, the second is for the other 50p which is paid monthly as £2. (You may think this is a bit complicated - it is. The implication is clear. If the single mum or dad has a man or woman enter his or her life, the 50p will be quickly stopped. Another job for the D.H.S.S. nightwatchmen! But, more to the point, the scheme, being complicated, is going to COST about £90 million a year to operate. One would think, that at this kind of cost, it would have been possible to work out a rather better system of benefits than an average 30p a week.) Still - the money, little as it is, is yours or right if you have children, so don't forget to claim your Child Benefit.

## ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

Apart from being held earlier than usual, there was a change of venue for this year's St. Paul's Church market. Bargain hunters made a beeline for the Nursery Centre at the end of April, and found a great deal to send them away happy. John Cooper told our reporter that this had been the most successful market to date. The considerable effort that members of the church put in was well rewarded, for over £170 was raised during the afternoon. Many congratulations to all concerned, and let's hope that next year sees another market every bit as successful as this one!

Bargain-hunters around the book-stall at St. Paul's Church Market.





# CLIFTON SCHOOL.

WE PRINT BELOW THE NEWS FROM CLIFTON SCHOOL'S STAFF. IN THE NEXT COLUMN ARE THREE PIECES OF WORK BY CHILDREN AT THE SCHOOL.

## AN ARTY WELCOME

We are starting an art and craft club at Clifton Junior School for parents and their children. The club will be held on Mondays at 4 p.m. Initially, parents with children in the 2nd and 3rd years have been invited to join, but we hope eventually to extend the club to parents of the rest of the children too. Mums and Dads will be able to try their hand at painting, modelling, sewing, etc., alongside their children, and we hope they'll have a lot of fun. Any parent of 2nd or 3rd year children who wants to join us is welcome to come to class 2H at 4 p.m. any Monday.

S. Harries.

## HEALTH IS WEALTH

Looking for an opportunity to show off new curtains in the school hall to mums and dads, we hit on the idea of an evening of films and food linked to health. Nearly 100 adults came, and from what was said, enjoyed the exhibition of children's work the food-tasting, and the cup of tea and chat with teachers. My particular thanks are due to homes for sending food, and the Food For All Restaurant in Hurst St. Although at the end it was standing room only, the response, as always with Clifton parents, was very encouraging, and fortunately the food lasted out!

D. Abbey.

## CHESS

This has been another successful season with the school team only beaten once. We have won our section and reached the last four in the West Zone of the English Primary Schools Cup. Seven boys have played for the Birmingham Primary Schools Team. In major individual competitions Satpal Singh came very close to winning an under-14 tournament.

K. Tatton.

## FOOTBALL

The football team ended the season on a winning note by beating King's Heath in their final league game. The team finished third in their section of the South Birmingham Schools. Transport to the fields was cancelled this term and so a local 'cross-country' run was one of the alternatives we organised. The route (for those who might wish to compare their own performance) was to run twice round a route which went from the school gate in Hartford St., right down Brunswick Rd., along White St. and return up Clifton Rd. The fastest time to date is 5 minutes 26 seconds, by Andrew Allen.

W. Emery.

## NETBALL

The School netball team played ten matches in the season, and won them all! They went into the play-off of the various league winners. Two teams entered the South Birmingham Primary Schools Netball rally at Swanshurst School - despite the rain we all had an enjoyable time, and one of our teams eventually reached the semi-final, being eventually knocked out by Park Hill School.

Miss N. Paddock.

(Congratulations to Clifton's teams on outstanding performances, whether with brains or muscles. Ed.)

## BELIEVE ME....

A long time ago the people said, "Why is the sea salty?" So they went to the wisest man in the country. The man said, "Now I will tell you why the sea is salty. When God was making the world, on the fifth day he had just finished making the sea, when his wife called him for dinner. When he started to eat, his wife said, 'We have got tins and tins of salt, we should throw some away.' God said 'Yes, we should.' So he threw it away. Then he remembered that he had just made the sea, and the salt landed in it. He could not change it because he had said that he would finish the world in six days and rest on the seventh day. So he finished the world in six days and the salty sea stayed in the world."

Sidney Blackwood 3M.

## WITH A PINCH OF SALT

One day, a long, long time ago, the sea was not salty but God said that there was not enough sea, because the people kept coming with their jugs and pots and taking the sea water. So God said, "I'll have to put a stop to this. He sent a message to the people, to tell them that if they didn't stop drinking the sea water he would put fish in it that eat people. But still they kept taking it and the sea water was getting shallower and shallower. So he put the fish in, but still the water went down. So he put everything in it that is in the sea today, but that didn't stop them. Then he had an idea, and God got all of the salt and put it in the sea, and that stopped them.

Ann Lawrence. 3M.

## DANGER!

I used to think it was awful to keep animals in cages, but now a lot of animals are nearly extinct. Some animals like koala bears, elephants, pandas, cheetahs, whales and bison are in danger. The whale is in danger because people kill it to make perfumes, lipsticks and other things. The elephant is in danger because people kill it to get its tusks which are ivory. Bison are in danger because people just kill them. If we are not careful there will not be any animals left.

Rukana Begum Rehman. 3T.

## WOMEN'S CENTRE

Many people may not realise that women have their own centre right here in Balsall Heath. It is at 75, Brighton Rd., and from the outside resembles many of the other houses in the road. Inside, women gather on several days and evenings to use the services offered by the women's centre, or simply for a chat. The centre has been going for about a year now. Their latest venture is pregnancy testing. They want to encourage more women to use this free service. Its quick - results are given on the spot, whereas it takes about a week usually, if you go to a doctor. All you need to do is bring along an early morning sample. Pregnancy testing is on Tuesdays from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 a.m.

Other activities are Saturday lunches, from 12 till 3 p.m. You can bring your children along with you to meet other families. The Women's Centre wants as much support as possible right now. They provide advice on a wide range of women's problems and feel they are an important centre in the community. They've run into planning difficulties with the Council, and the centre in Brighton Rd. is threatened, unless they can prove their worth. So any woman who wants help, or just a chat, is welcome to go along and call in.

By Vera Gilbert. (Heath Reporter.)

St.  
Paul's



## LIGHTER NOTE

The Nursery and Hall's spring face-lift has been going on since Christmas, but is now nearly complete. First, the main hall and all the rooms were painted, and new lights were fitted in the hall. Then we had the men's loos, which were unusable, done up and made into separate men's and women's toilets.

### VOLUNTEERS?

Anyone passing down St. Paul's Rd. will notice the new wooden fence and the first stage of a new outside play area. Frank Triggs has been working overtime to get the sandpit, slide track and mounded surface ready for the turfing. Various structures will be built - a storage hut, wendy houses, raised flower beds, etc. will soon adorn this formerly derelict plot of land. The Nursery staff and other users of the Nursery can't wait for Frank to complete this new site. Any volunteers to help Frank?

### A FUND OF GOODWILL

Further good news: the Nursery Mums have now raised £1,000 from local charities to replace our older pieces of (mainly indoor) equipment. Users of the hall will have noticed several new and gleaming play structures, table toys, trikes, and so on - all bought with the aid of the Mums' funds. The Nursery staff asked us to convey their thanks to the Mums, to Frank Triggs, to the charities who gave money, and to Social Services. Without the help of all these, none of the improvements could have taken place.

### A COMPLAINT

Three of the new tricycles were stolen recently from the Nursery's playground. They were last sighted in Kingsley Rd. As we have said, they were bought with money raised by the children's parents, and the children need them. If anyone spots them, do please tell us. Or if your child came home one day with a new trike, please tell him it's not his, and return it. We'd be very grateful.



The Nursery is already making good use of its part-share of the new minibus. On a Tuesday morning there are regular outings to Cannon Hill

Park, and places further afield, such as the Botanical Gardens. We also visited Twycross Zoo, and had a hilarious and enjoyable time looking at all of the animals. Many of the children have no experience at all of animals, and it's so difficult to explain from a picture what an elephant or a monkey is really like.

### WEIGHING US UP

The Nursery's Thursday morning club for 'mums' continues to flourish. You don't have to have a child at the nursery to join in. It's possible just to have a chat and a cup of coffee, or to make something for the monthly market stall. Or you can take part in the latest venture, the Keep Fit club and weekly weigh-in! The Thursday club recently had a most enjoyable evening out and dinner (it was soon after this that the slimming started!) and they plan another party soon - it is intended to make it a regular feature of the club.



NURSERY MUMS AND FRIENDS BEGIN A SERIOUS ATTACK ON FITNESS, WEIGHT PROBLEMS, Etc. NO QUESTION ABOUT IT - THEY CAN SEE THEIR OWN TOES, SO THE PROBLEMS AREN'T TOO BAD!

### VACANCIES

The Nursery now has some vacancies for children and will have some more in September when the older children will be going on to infants' school. So, anyone with a child aged 2½ to 5 years who wants to apply for a place, can call in and see the Matron, or phone 440-4603. Fees are reasonable, and it really does stand your child in good stead, with all the opportunities for play and learning with other children. We are also in need of one member of staff. We need qualified applicants. But we also always need volunteer helpers - to read a small group of children a story, do a bit of painting, or accompany the children and staff on one of the Tuesday outings. If you are interested, do please drop in. There will always be something for you to do.

from  
the

# COMMUNITY SCHOOL

At the beginning of this term I took over from Mick Atkinson as Head Teacher of the School, and consequently I have also taken over the job of writing this column, for the Heathan. Dick continues to help the School in all sorts of ways, and is Chairman of our new Board of Governors. He is, of course, responsible for raising large-scale funds for not only the School, but also St. Paul's Nursery and Malvern St. Play Centre. This task, along with co-ordinating the work of these three projects, is so exacting that it could no longer be combined with the role of Head of the School. It is very encouraging indeed to start the job feeling that a great deal of help and support is being given to all the staff and pupils by parents. The Fund-Raising Committee, which is still relatively new, is making all our jobs easier (even Dick's!) by producing large sums of money for new equipment, mainly through the Tote. They have been helped a lot, too, by parents of former pupils. They have now raised their second £100, and are well on the way to the third. Home Economics has benefited this time from the fund.

## EXAM FEVER

The senior pupils are having a gruelling time at present, taking their C.S.E. and O.L. exams. There are eight pupils taking papers in 7 different subjects. As this means about 18 separate exams for some of them, you can understand it if they are looking a little pale just now. We are proud of all their hard work, though, and we know they will do well. (The other children have their exams to look forward to at the end of term!)

## STORMING THE CASTLE

We undertook another great trek in April, this time to the Forest of Dean and the Wye Valley. Twenty-one of us walked an estimated 49 miles along a route that the books assured us was peaceful compared with our previous Peak District assault course. However, the general feeling was that 'valley' was a very misleading description for an area strongly resembling a switchback railway. The most exciting experience was staying in St. Briaevels Youth Hostel, which is a genuine Norman Castle. The girls slept in a former chapel, the boys were adjacent to the castle prison, the lights fused and we ate by candlelight, and ghosts were rampant. Despite all the blisters we kept collecting, along with the fossils, plants, photos, maps and sketches, we are determined to keep going. In July we are bound for the Yorkshire coast and moors, and more mileage among the youth hostels.

## KEEPING BUSY

Apart from the field trips, we keep adding to our activities. This term we have been visiting Cannon Hill Arts Centre to play various musical instruments in their music workshop, and to see films and plays. Paul Oliver has built a good-size greenhouse in one of our gardens. The Environmental Studies pupils have investigated the Rice Station, a pottery, the Science Museum, and a sewage works. The School magazine is coming out shortly, and we are hard at work on our float and stalls for the Carnival.

## SPECIAL REQUESTS

Last term we asked if anyone had a record-player they didn't want, and we were lucky enough to be given a really super one, which we are now using in music lessons. Many thanks from all of us to

the givers! Can we now ask (more modestly) if you have any unwanted jam jars, pieces of material balls of wool, tins of paint? Any of these would help our craft departments very much, if you drop them into 121, St. Paul's Rd. or phone 440-4376, and we will collect.

Anita Halliday.

## Norfolk Disappointment.

For the past four years the Community House and School has organised holidays-away-from-home for large numbers of local children, and some local adults. This year, however, owing to the cuts in public expenditure, NO grant at all has been received from the Council's Recreation and Amenities Department to help finance the holidays. It is impossible, therefore, for the School to run its Norfolk holiday trips on the scale we have managed in the past. Although staff helpers always give their time and work free of any fee, and we have always raised extra money on top of our Council grant to help pay for the holidays, we simply cannot replace the grant we are not getting. There are going to be an awful lot of disappointed kids in Balsall Heath this summer, and we are desperately sorry. We shall be running one trip to Norfolk, but that's all, and we will have to raise the money for this ourselves. Many apologies to all those we must turn away.

## OPEN DOOR, HELPING HAND.

In a city as huge as Birmingham, there are bound to be many young people who feel depressed, anxious and lonely. If people feeling like this have no-one to talk to and don't want to approach official agencies, where CAN they go for help? Open Door is a free, completely confidential counselling service for young people. It aims to give them a chance to talk through their problems. We now have two new centres at The Lane Neighbourhood Centre and at Cannon Hill Arts Centre.

## WELCOME

If you have a problem of any kind and would like to talk about it, why not ring us (643-7717) and make an appointment to see a counsellor? Or just pop in to one of our centres where you will be met by our friendly receptionist, who will arrange for you to see a counsellor the same evening. There's no need to keep your problems to yourself any more - remember, we really do have an 'Open Door.'

Rajinder Wiburg.

free, confidential..

## THE OPEN DOOR YOUTH COUNSELLING SERVICE

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All bookings and enquiries about events and membership should be made to:-  
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for Young People, Cannon Hill Park,  
Birmingham B12 9QH. Tel: 021-440 3838  
Weekdays 10.00 - 18.00, Sundays 13.30

Sunday June 26th  
Arena Theatre  
Double Bill  
MY/D and JOSEPH LECKIE SCHOOL CONCERT BAND  
The Midlands Youth Jazz Orchestra

9th July KING ARTHUR AND THE KNIGHTS OF TENTACLE CASTLE  
A Rock Musical for children by children, Music and lyrics by Kevin Jones.

Music

June 24 18.30 - 23.30  
A five-hour ROCK CONCERT featuring the best of local bands

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