

# **IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PHYLLIS...**

**THE BIRMINGHAM PHOTOGRAPHIC GRID PROJECT 2017  
LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM EXHIBITION | DAVE ALLEN**



Preedys  
and  
Tobacco

SIMPSON'S  
GLASGOW

WHITALL

WOODS STORE  
A NEW LITTLEWOODS STORE

EVE BROW

CHOCOLATE  
KABIN

DOUBLE DECKER BUS  
SHERIFF PARKWAY



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Illustration Page 67. W. Radclyffe after D. Cox, published Dec 3rd 1827. Science Museum Group Collection

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“All photographs  
are *memento mori*.”

Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (1979)

## IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PHYLLIS...

Between April and December 2017, a team of 71 photographers took 863 photographs of Birmingham. The locations for these photographs were determined by the places that Phyllis Nicklin photographed between 1953 and 1969. As a Geographer, Phyllis Nicklin was acutely sensitive to the Birmingham environment. Her photographs tell us that change was the key to where she went: places that were changing, that had recently changed and those that she knew were about to change.

Around half a century on, the Birmingham Photographic Grid Project paid homage to this amazing woman's work. It had been a decade since the first Birmingham Grid Project, *Inside The Outer Circle* (2007). Previously we had used maps to determine arbitrary locations for photographs: this time we decided to follow in Phyllis Nicklin's footsteps.

The project has been exhibited in three venues at the time of writing: at The Gunmakers Arms in January 2018, the main show at the Library of Birmingham Gallery from July to September 2018 and at The Moseley Community Hub (formerly Moseley Road School of Art) as its inaugural exhibition in May 2019.

This volume is a record of the library exhibition, which was dedicated to the memory of Pete James. Pete had encouraged and supported the Grid Project from its early days. Thanks go to Trevor Beattie for making the show possible.

Dave Allen, 2019



Born 1909, Aston, Birmingham

Educated George Dixon Grammar School for Girls

Studied Geography University of Birmingham (MA 1931)

Senior Geography Mistress, Sutton High School (1934)

Geography Lecturer, University of Nottingham (1944)

Geography Lecturer, University of Birmingham (1950-1969)

Photographs of Birmingham area (1953-1969)

Died 1969, Selly Oak

## PHYLLIS NICKLIN

The Phyllis Nicklin photographs on which this project is based were taken for use in her teaching, but not much else is known about her. She did, though, hold the respect of her academic peers, as noted in Maddrell (2011), *Complex Locations: Women's Geographical Work in the UK 1850-1970*.

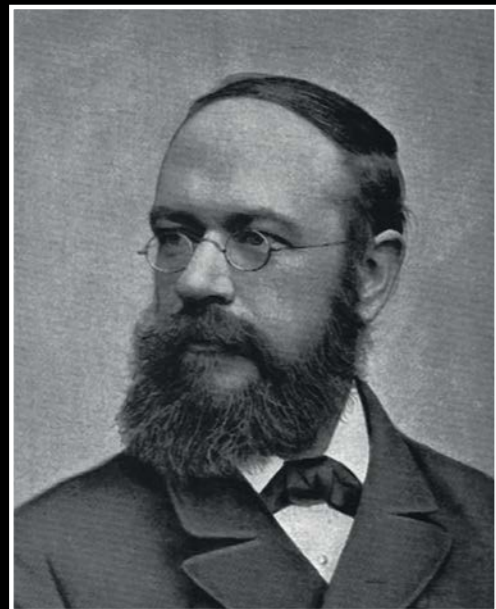
“Miss Nicklin was considered a great rock in the world of geographical education and spent over twenty years as the driving force behind what is the most successful liaison between an academic department, extra-mural department, and the local branch of the Association that could be found in any University city.”

Project participant Geoff Dowling, a noted Birmingham photographer and former colleague of Phyllis Nicklin at the University of Birmingham, recalled:

“I was a junior technician in the photographic section and she was using our teaching labs for her meetings of the Geographical Society. To be honest she would appear just before home time with a list of demands for her evening lectures which was a far from popular trick! When she died she left her Geographical library to the School of Geography but it got “thinned out” . She left other bits and pieces but new heads of school wanted to be rid of ‘old stuff’ taking up valuable space. I suspect most got binned.

I managed to save many rolls of her 35mm negative film taken in the 1930's. The problem is film, in those days, was quite unstable and this has been rolled for over 80 years. I have not thought of a way of scanning it although one or two got printed and used by Carl Chinn.

Miss P.A. Nicklin was a very old school type, tweed skirts and grey woolly stockings and a person as young as I was at the time did not, ever, call her Phyllis!”



William Jerome Harrison (1845 - 1908)



Sir Benjamin Stone (1838 - 1914)

## THE WARWICKSHIRE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

The Warwickshire Photographic Survey, archived at The Library of Birmingham, was drawn to our attention by Pete James when he stumbled across the Grid Project.

“Found out about your 2007 grid project through *Created in Birmingham* and was very interested in its historical links, conscious or otherwise, to a 19th Century project called the Warwickshire Photographic Survey, run by members of the Birmingham Photographic Society, which involved amateur photographers being allocated map areas and documenting sites of historical interest of their choice.” (Pete James, Head of Photographs, Birmingham Central Library, 2008)

The Warwickshire Photographic Survey was founded in 1890 by two local photographers, William Jerome Harrison and John Benjamin Stone. It was formed to create a photographic record of the urban and rural landscape of Warwickshire which was undergoing rapid transformation. Each year the Survey Committee allocated teams of photographers to a geographic area, who would draw up lists of promising sites and buildings, after which photographic studies of the area were undertaken.

A selection of photography was exhibited annually at Birmingham Art Gallery and prints were regularly deposited at the Central Library. The Survey remained functional until the late 1950s. The Birmingham Library continued to add prints right up until 2008 and the collection provides striking visual evidence of the changes that have marked the local landscape, for example the effects of rapid industrialisation and economic decline, wartime bombing, slum clearance and redevelopment projects.

**“By securing accurate representations of old buildings we can furnish a record for posterity, whose accuracy cannot be disputed, and whose interest in the future will be great. But I would not only photograph the old buildings - I would secure on rapid plates impressions of the daily appearance of our streets, of the principal lines of thoroughfare, and of the busy crowds by which they are traversed. Even in the half century which has elapsed since the discovery of photography, if such pictures could have been secured of Birmingham at intervals of every five or ten years, what an interest they would have for us today!”**

*William Jerome Harrison in Notes Upon A proposed Photographic Survey Of Warwickshire, read before The Birmingham Photographic Society December 11th 1889*



Courts 14 & 15, Bordesley Street and Milk Street



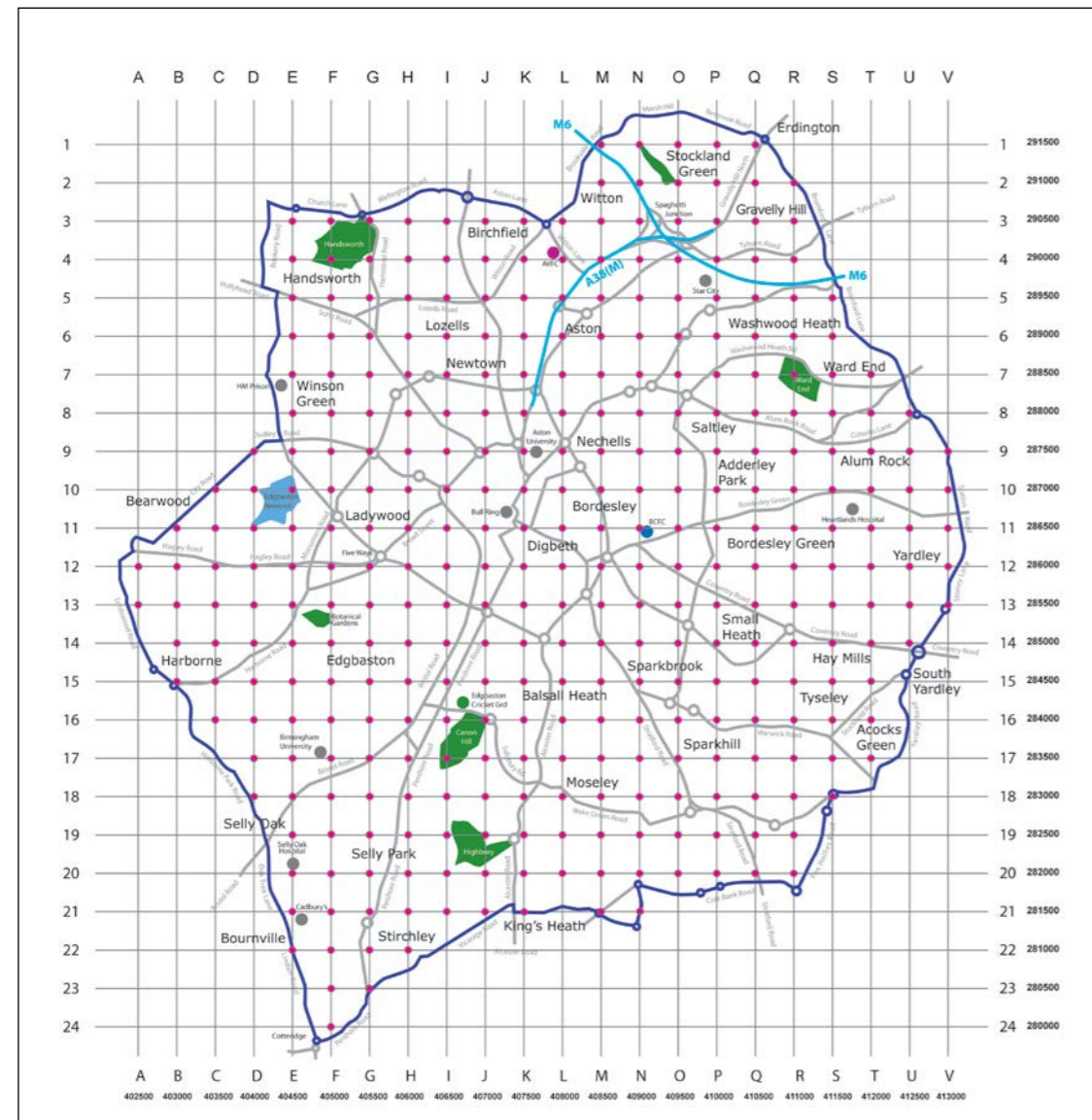
Anderton's Square, Whittall Street (1932)



Canal Offices, Paradise Street (1905)



Ladywell Baths, Ladywell Passage (1913)



# THE GRID PROJECT

A photographic grid is a collaborative venture which aims to make a meaningful visual statement about an environment by adopting a systematic approach. What does this place look like? What does this place feel like? The grid imposes a system that may sometimes locate the picturesque but is just as likely to find the industrial, the rugged, the new, old, boring, threatening or just ugly.

*In The Footsteps Of Phyllis...* differed from previous Grid Projects in that the arbitrary locations were not defined by a map. The intention behind using a map-based grid was to record the environment in photographs without being able to cherry-pick the most obvious locations. This emerged through a reaction against corporate urban photography and an acknowledgement that interesting or revealing locations can be found in off-beat places. The photographs produced were then displayed in a grid formation which matched the map.

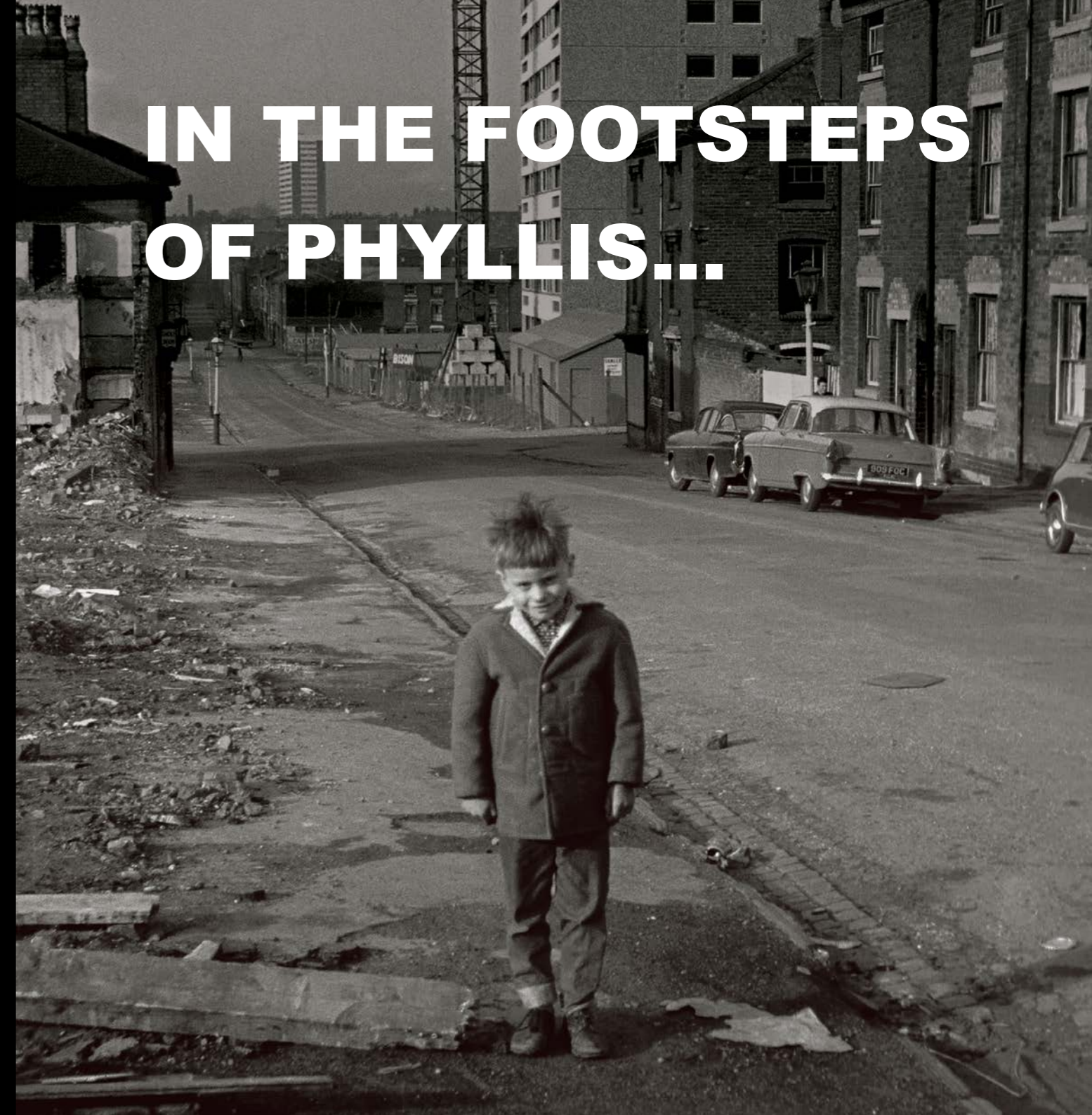


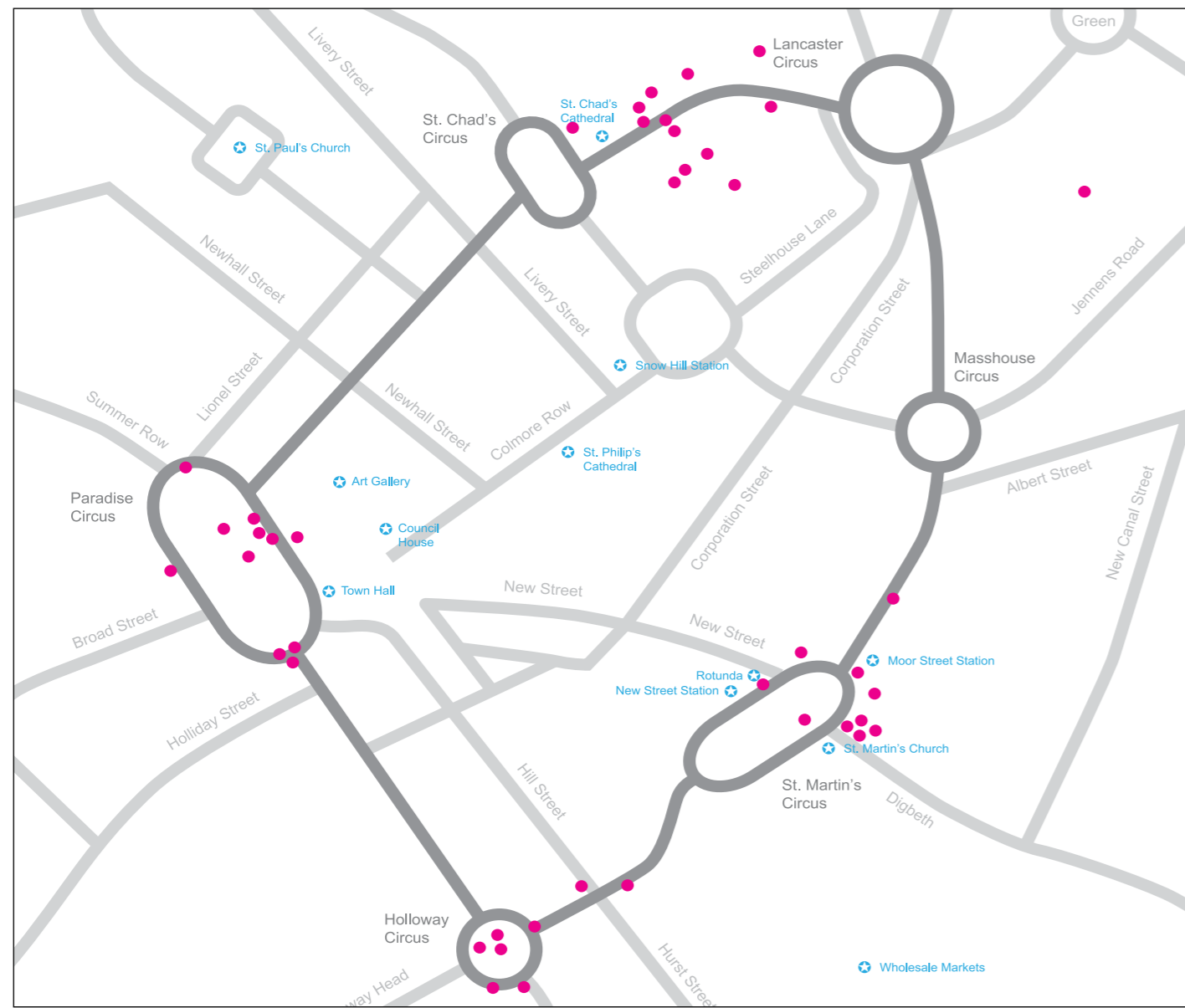
*Inside The Outer Circle...*  
The Birmingham Photographic Grid  
Project 2007, The Mailbox, 2008-9

**“A device is available  
to record what  
is disappearing.”**

Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (1979)

**IN THE FOOTSTEPS  
OF PHYLLIS...**





## THE RING ROAD, VIA PARADISE

**“By 1970 Birmingham stood as Britain’s most unabashedly modern and even ‘transatlantic’ city, a status that owed much to the car and the associated system of urban expressways, of which the Inner Ring and Gravelly Hill Interchange, popularly known as Spaghetti Junction, were the prime exemplars.”**

(Simon Gunn in *Ring Road: Birmingham and the Collapse of the Motor City Ideal in 1970s Britain*, 2017.)

The map opposite suggests Phyllis Nicklin’s interest in the transformations produced by the construction of the Inner Ring Road. Her photograph locations (shown as dots), taken between 1959 and 1969, include views seen before, during and after its construction.

Overseen by the City’s Engineer Sir Herbert Manzoni (1895-1972), plans for the road commenced during World War II (1943) and included the purchase and clearance of land. Many buildings now seen as important were cleared. Even Pugin’s St. Chad’s Cathedral only avoided demolition by a single vote at a Birmingham Council meeting.

In the contemporary photos produced for this project (2017) we can see the effects of further regeneration that was informed by The Big City Plan, launched in 2008.

EDMUND STREET, PARADISE CIRCUS AREA



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Brian Burnett (2017)

SMALLBROOK RINGWAY, NEW INNER RING ROAD



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

SMALLBROOK RINGWAY / HILL STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

ALBANY HOTEL, SMALLBROOK RINGWAY



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)

HOLLOWAY CIRCUS



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)



Cara Green (2017)



Geoff Dowling (2017)

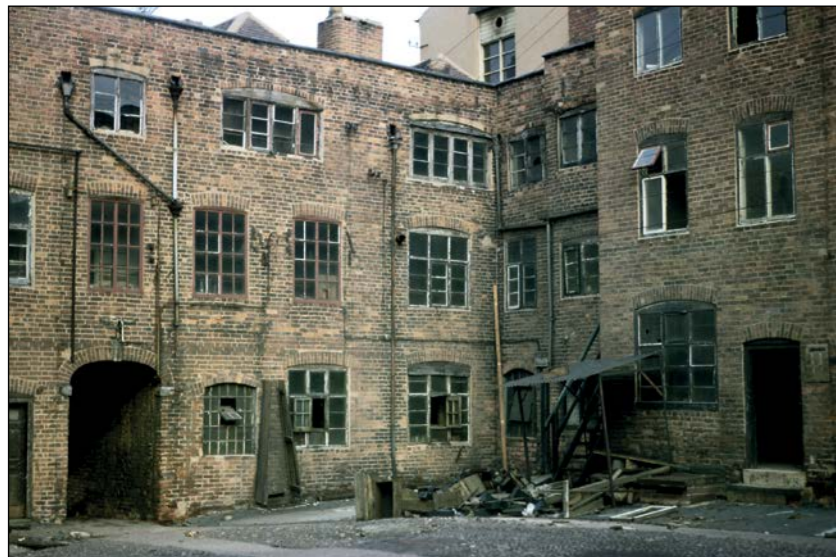


Albert Blakeway (2017)

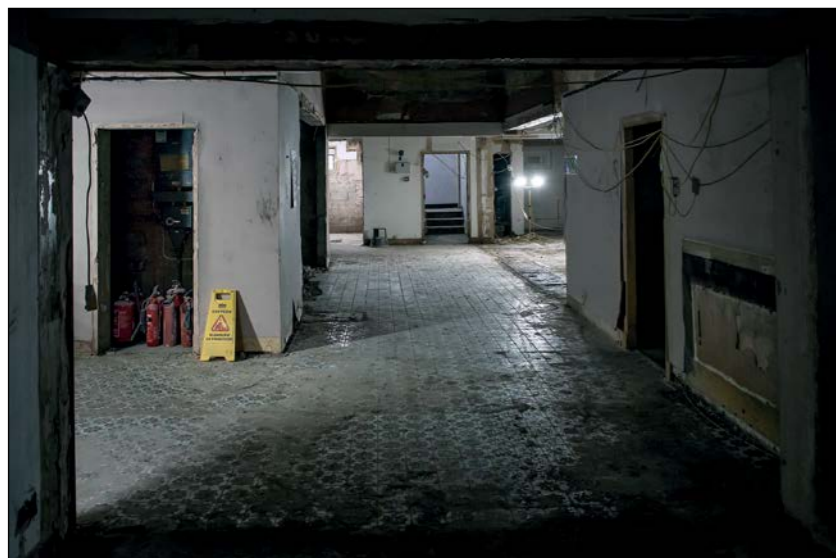


James Allen (2017)

ANDERTON'S YARD, WHITTALL STREET, GUN QUARTER



Phyllis Nicklin (1963)



Jay Mason-Burns (2017)

MOOR ST / PARK ST, INNER RING ROAD PREPARATIONS



Phyllis Nicklin (1959)



Phil Lumby (2017)

THE ROTUNDA AND BULLRING



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Malcolm Veitch (2017)

EASY ROW



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Eugene Farrell (2017)

GREAT CHARLES STREET, INNER RING ROAD WORKS



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Jay Mason-Burns (2017)

PARADISE CIRCUS



Phyllis Nicklin (1969)



Wali Taylor (2017)



# WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

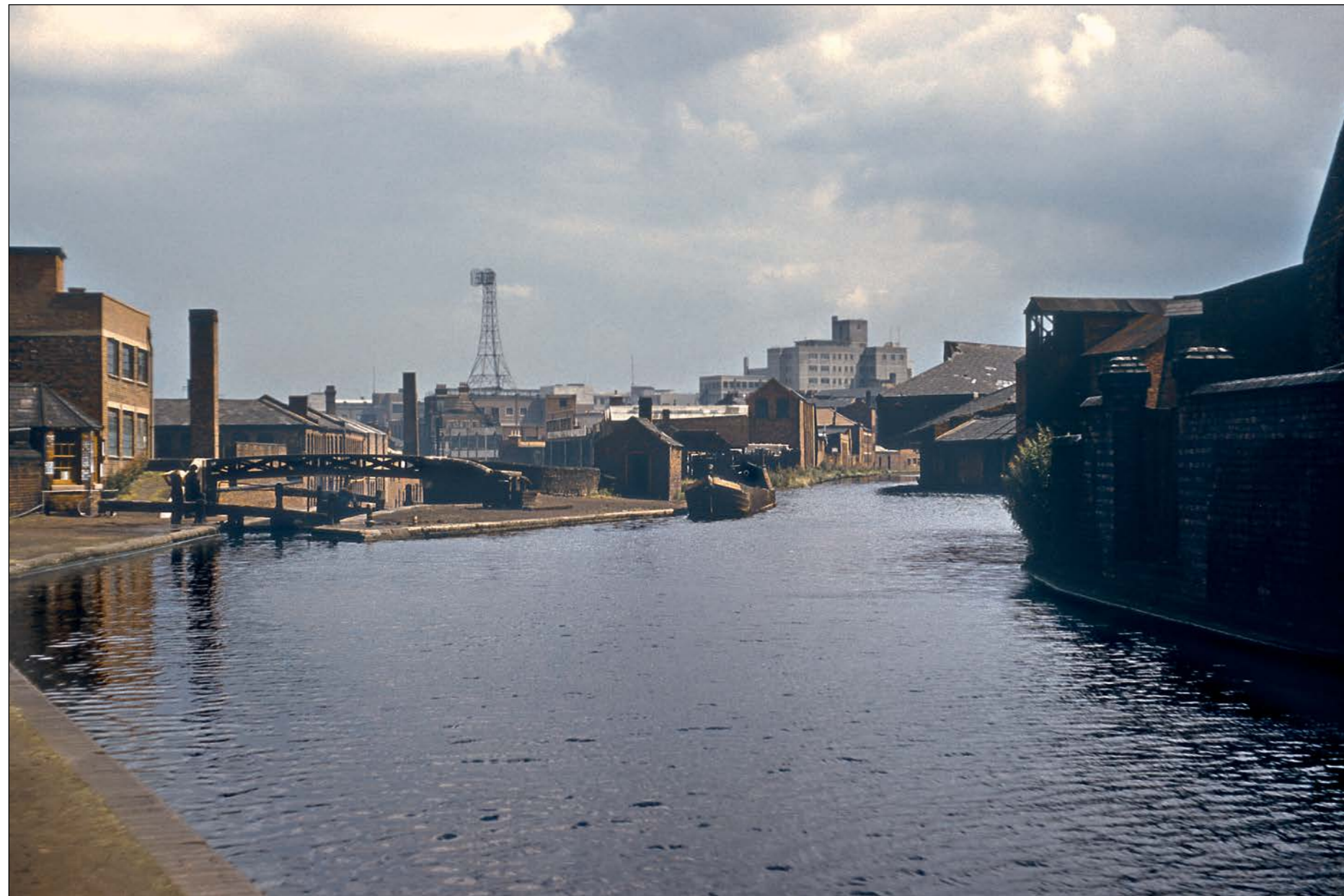
Traditionally major trading cities were on the coast, a major river or a well-defined trade route such as the Silk Road. Birmingham had none of these advantages, yet it grew to be the manufacturing powerhouse for an empire. At the heart of this was the (then) 160 miles of the Birmingham Canal Navigations (BCN) which allowed quick and efficient passage of goods and raw materials between Birmingham and the Black Country. At the time Phyllis Nicklin was active she was recording the final decline of this system, leading to dereliction and rebirth into what we have today.

To supply water to 160 miles of canal required a series of reservoirs, one of which is Edgbaston Reservoir which Phyllis photographed more than once, be it the reservoir itself or the view over industrial Ladywood from the retaining bank. To connect Birmingham to the rest of the country and the major seaports, canals were built that radiated away from the BCN and Phyllis captured all of these.

The Worcester & Birmingham Canal starts at Gas Street Basin and passes through Selly Oak and Bournville on its way to Worcester. The Grand Union Canal is seen from its most Northern part to its passage through Small Heath and Tyseley. She also photographed the Tame Valley Canal and the Birmingham & Fazeley, both now overshadowed by Spaghetti Junction. As the canals declined, to be superseded by rail and road, Birmingham continued to thrive and the waterways network we have today is a lasting monument to Birmingham's flowering into the great city it became.

Peter Allen

BIRMINGHAM FAZELEY CANAL



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Peter Allen (2017)

## UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDGBASTON POOL



Phyllis Nicklin (1969)



Jerry Tew (2017)

HOCKLEY BROOK, SALFORD



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Peter Allen (2017)

## THE RIVER TAME, WITTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



John Hill (2017)

DUDLEY TO WORCESTER CANAL, SELLY OAK



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Peter Allen (2017)

CANNON HILL PARK

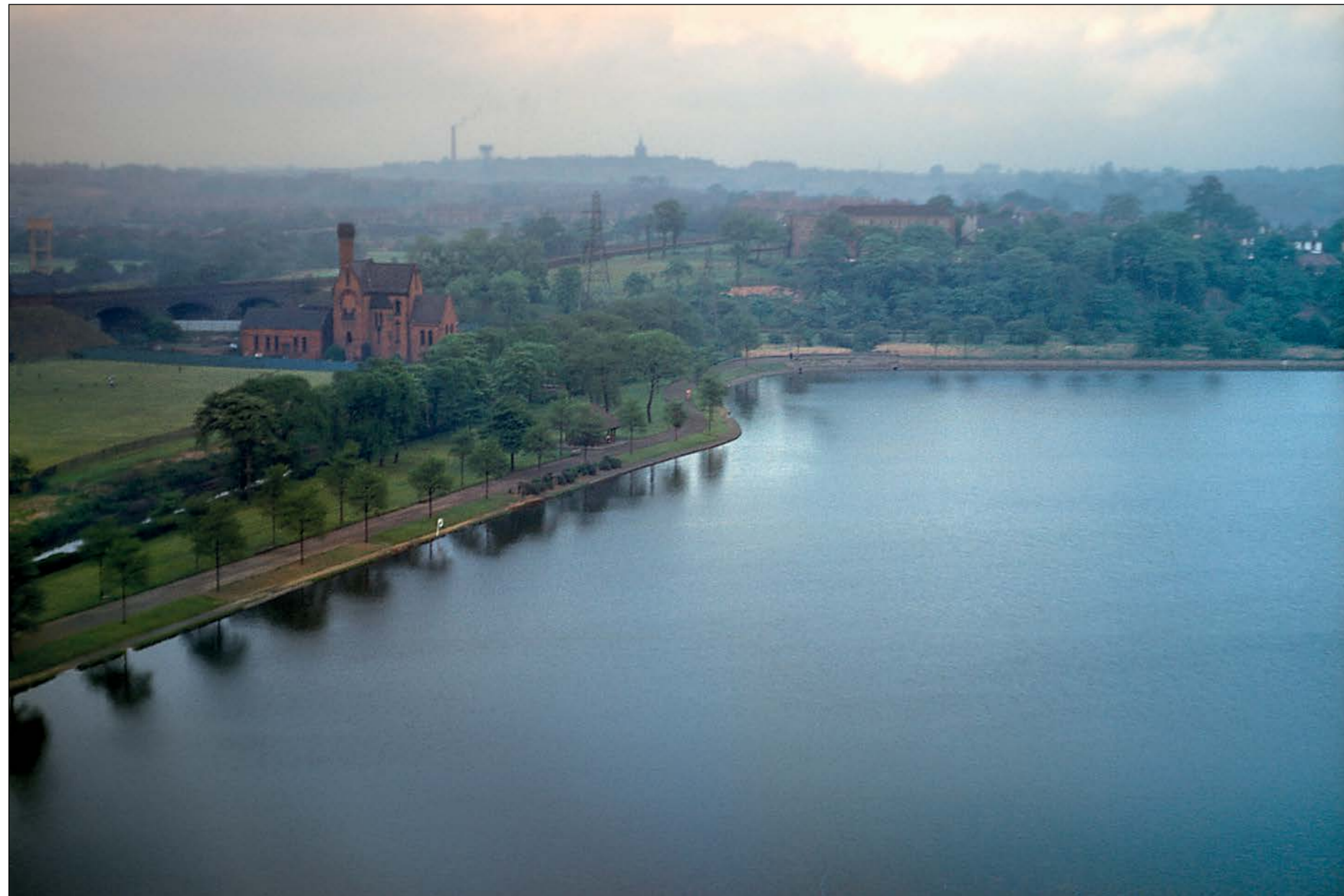


Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Paul Bartlett (2017)

## ASTON RESERVOIR



Phyllis Nicklin (1957)



John Timmins (2017)

LONGBRIDGE PUMPING STATION



Phyllis Nicklin (1959)



John Mackay (2017)

NECHELLS POWER STATION, TAME VALLEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

NECHELLS POWER STATION, TAME VALLEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

EDGBASTON RESERVOIR



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)

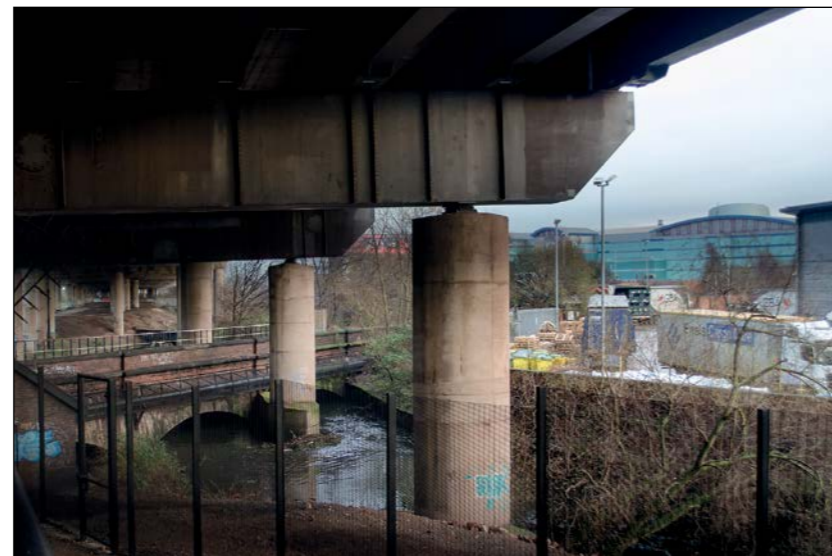
WARWICK AND BIRMINGHAM CANAL, SMALL HEATH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Malcolm Veitch (2017)



Peter Allen (2017)



Prue Evans (2017)



Pete Davies (2017)



## THE VIEW FROM ON HIGH

Phyllis Nicklin's photographs have some interesting traits when it comes to her vantage points. This section of photographs is all about her use of elevated positions: it is only in these photographs, totalling about 6% of her output, that she tilted the camera slightly downwards.

For most of her other pictures she held her camera level with the ground, leading to upright lines remaining vertical in the resulting photographs. The drama of perspective effects is thus reduced, leading us to notice the subject of the photograph more than the dynamics of the image itself.

Working from high positions gave her the opportunity to show the lie of the land and freed her from the issues involved in showing the facades of rows of buildings through her 50mm lens. The use of this focal length probably explains why her vanishing points are so often at the edge of the picture or even *beyond* the edge. Around 40% of her images are like this. She had to step back (often to a position in the opposite gutter) and look obliquely at the buildings on the opposite side of the road in order to fit them in - hence the vanishing points are on the extreme right or left side of the frame. Had she owned a wide-angle lens perhaps we would have seen less of this characteristic.

Another favoured vantage point was from the middle of the road, seen in around one fifth of her pictures. This allowed her to show the facades on both sides of the road and resulted in central vanishing points.

**BROMFORD ESTATE, TAME VALLEY**



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Brian Burnett (2017)

THE REA VALLEY TOWARDS DIGBETH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Geoff Dowling (2017)

ROTUNDA VIEW OF CURZON STREET STATION



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)



Teresa Dolan (2017)

ROTUNDA VIEW OVER THE ROOF OF NEW STREET STATION



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)



Dave Allen (2017)

ROTUNDA VIEW TOWARDS FIVE WAYS



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)



Jay Mason-Burns (2017)

ROTUNDA VIEW TOWARDS CORPORATION STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)

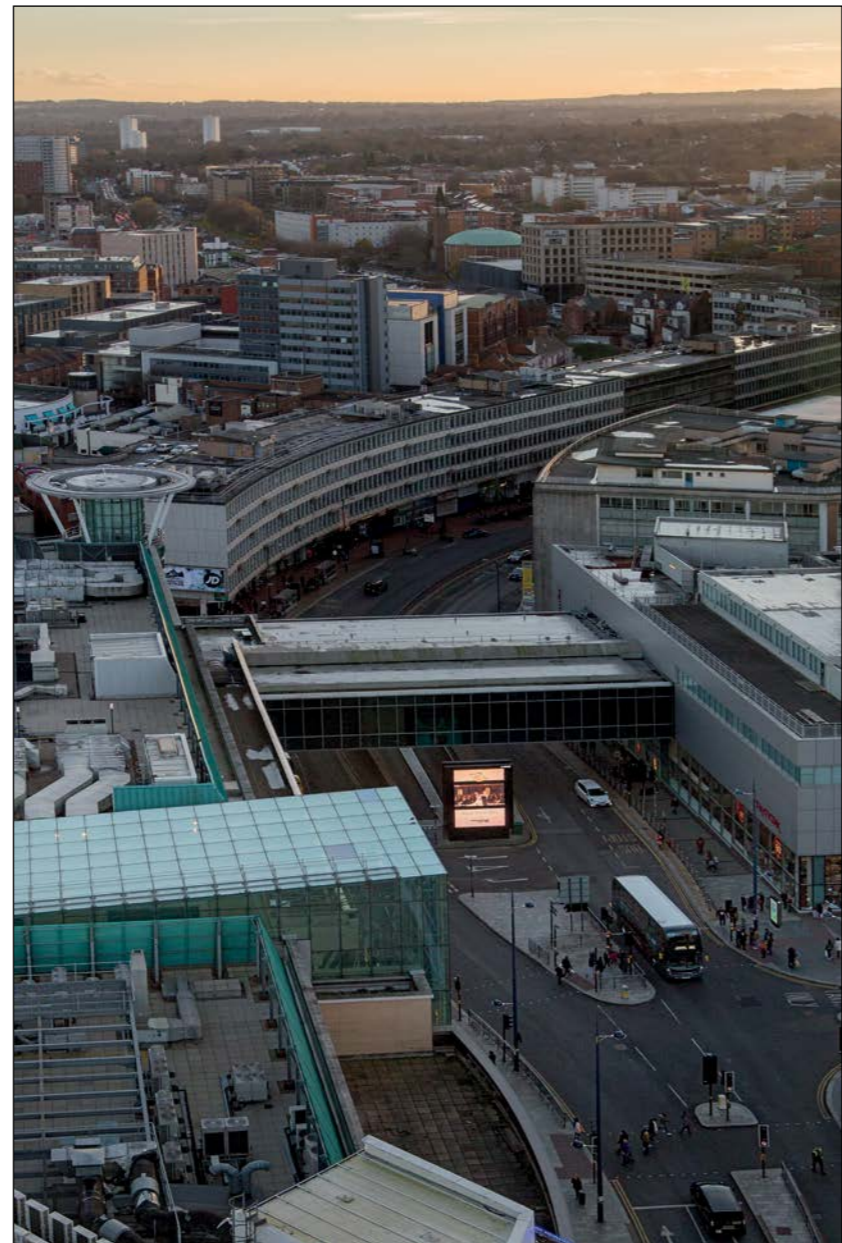


Sofia Johnston (2017)

ROTUNDA VIEW TOWARDS EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)

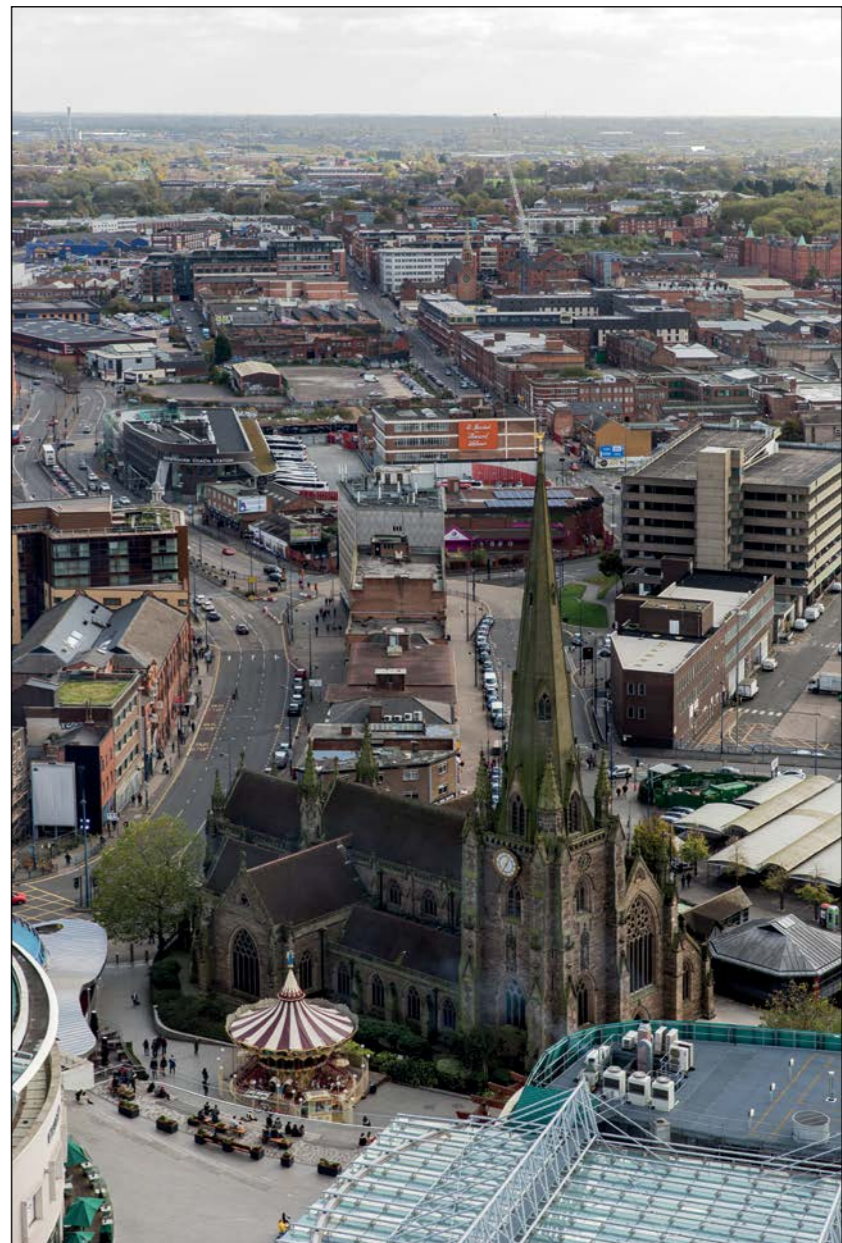


Trevor Beattie (2017)

ROTUNDA VIEW OVER ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)



Teresa Dolan (2017)

NEW FLATS IN LODGE FARM ROAD, NORTHFIELD / FRANKLEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1956)



Isobel Mason-Burns (2017)



## GOING INTO TOWN



THE BULLRING



Phyllis Nicklin (1959)



Geoff Dowling (2017)

DIGBETH



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Daan Bijdevaate (2017)

THE BULLRING



Phyllis Nicklin [undated]



Robyn Allen (2017)

NEW STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Cara Green (2017)

COLMORE ROW



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Wendy Miller (2017)

## ART GALLERY, VICTORIA SQUARE



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Paul Bartlett (2017)

HIGH STREET, BULL STREET, CORNER OF DALE END



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Dave Allen (2017)

COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE

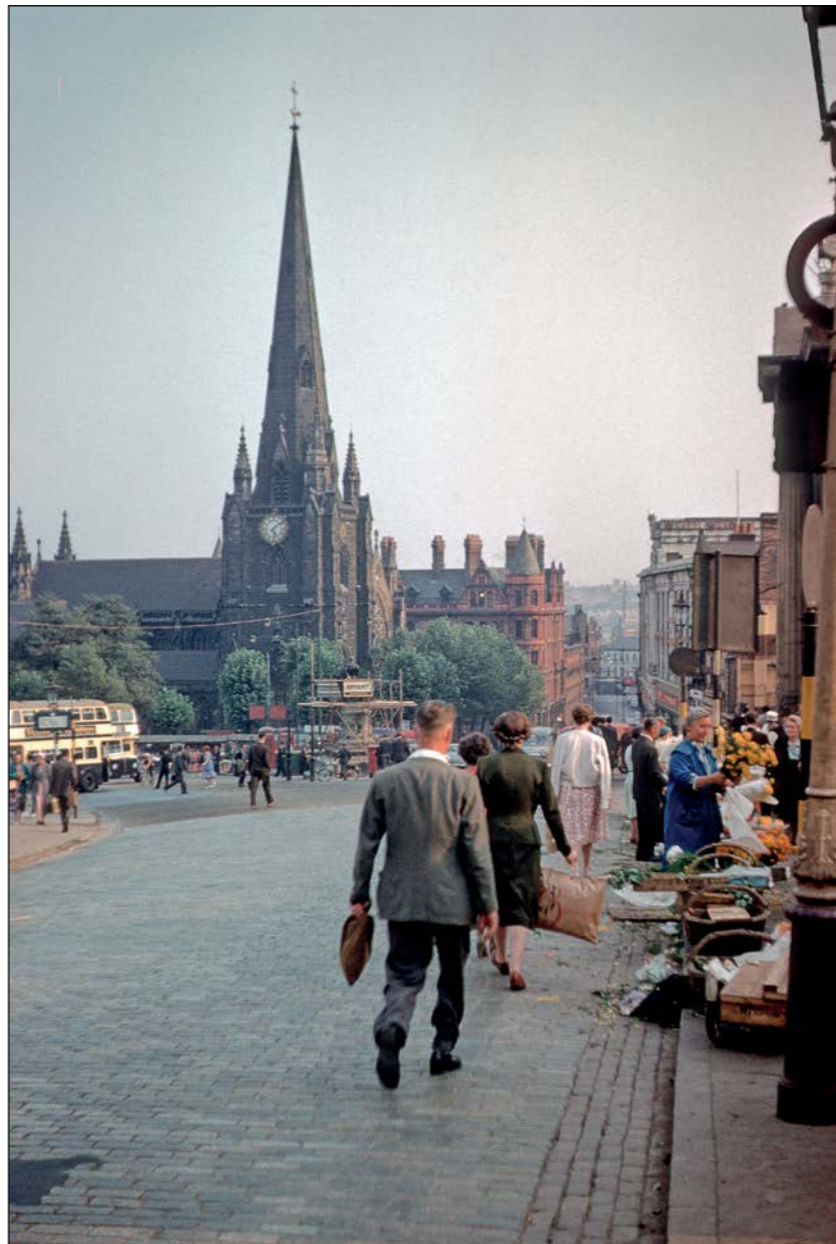


Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Nick Greenwood (2017)

THE BULLRING



Phyllis Nicklin (1959)



Nick Greenwood (2017)



## THE WHEELS THAT TURNED

Around the time Phyllis Nicklin started taking her colour slides a substantial majority of the workforce was involved with manufacturing. Wages in Birmingham were, in general, high and unemployment was low.

The motor trade overall accounted for 16.2% of the workforce, while a further 9.1% were involved with actual vehicle manufacture, 13.3% in engineering and 11.9% in the manufacture of other metal goods. Compared to manufacturing in general, the service industries employed far fewer workers.

Although brass manufacturing and jewellery seem low in employment numbers at 5%, this hides the fact that they accounted for a large percentage of the national picture, with gunmaking and jewellery continuing to prosper over this period. Clusters of small workshops situated near the city centre often carried out single-process manufacturing: they could adapt quickly to changing needs and even, in combination with their near-neighbours, could emulate some of the advantages gained by large-scale concerns.

Unlike the small workshops, the newest and biggest factories were outside the middle ring. However these, even Longbridge (which was essentially an assembly plant), were dependent on smaller workshops which supplied components.

There were significant changes of emphasis between 1951 and 1966, as seen in the census data. There was a 10% decline in the manufacturing workforce, while the service sector increased by 24%: the cumulative effect, though, was to increase the number of jobs available in Birmingham.

SUTCLIFFE, A and SMITH, R. 1974. *History of Birmingham Volume III: Birmingham 1939-1970*. London: OUP.

PRICE STREET, GUN QUARTER



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Ron Carter (2017)

AUSTIN MOTOR WORKS, LONGBRIDGE



Phyllis Nicklin (1959)



John Hill (2017)

BSA WORKS, ARMOURY ROAD, SMALL HEATH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Wali Taylor (2017)

## GEC ENTRANCE, ELECTRIC AVENUE, WITTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



John Timmins (2017)

HYLTON STREET, JEWELLERY QUARTER



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Maggie Bucknall (2017)

CADBURY PLAYING FIELDS, BOURNVILLE



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Jay Mason-Burns (2017)

ENGINE SHEDS, TYSELEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



David Moore (2017)

## CURZON STREET STATION



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



James Allen (2017)



**CONTINUITY & CHANGE**

H SAMUEL'S JEWELLERY WORKS, HUNTERS ROAD, HOCKLEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



John Hill (2017)

HANDSWORTH COLLEGE OF ART



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Narinder Chahal (2017)

KINGS NORTON GREEN



Phyllis Nicklin (undated)



Peter Reynolds (2017)

NO.17 ABBEY ROAD, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1961)



Phil Edwards (2017)

BOUNDARY: KINGS NORTON (RIGHT), NORTHFIELD (LEFT)



Phyllis Nicklin (1963)



Peter Turner (2017)

36, CALTHORPE ROAD, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Nic Patchett (2017)

CHURCH HOUSE, CHURCH ROAD, NORTHFIELD



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Stuart Pittwood (2017)

CORNER OF VIVIAN ROAD, HARBORNE

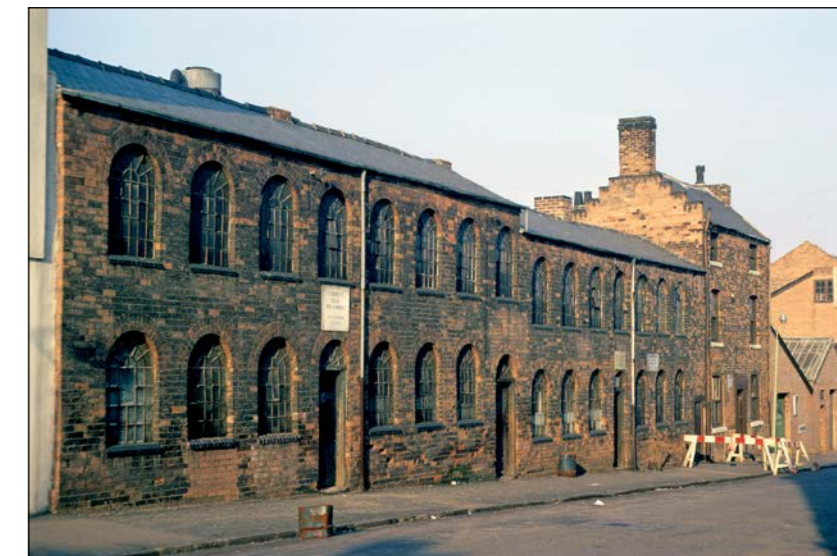


Phyllis Nicklin (1961)



Wendy Edwards (2017)

OLD WORKSHOPS, MARY STREET, JEWELLERY QUARTER



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Maggie Bucknall (2017)

BENNETT'S HILL / WATERLOO STREET, CENTRAL BIRMINGHAM



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Philip Jackson (2017)

## CALTHORPE ROAD, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



David Roberts (2017)

WOODBROOKE ROAD PARK, BOURNVILLE



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Steven Nolan (2017)

AA HEADQUARTERS, HAGLEY ROAD, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Sunrise Lovatt (2017)

HARBORNE TENANTS ASSOCIATION, MOOR POOL



Phyllis Nicklin (1961)



Tony Bucknall (2017)

MAIN GREAT WESTERN LINE, TYSELEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Abigail Wills (2017)

PERRY HALL, TAME VALLEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Brian Burnett (2017)

ST MARY'S CHURCH, HANDSWORTH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



George Daley (2017)

WEEKIN WORKS, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Kay Emblen-Perry (2017)

ST PETER'S SCHOOL, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1961)



Lyndon Townsend (2017)

CASTLE BROMWICH HALL



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

OLD COTTAGE, AMPTON ROAD, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1954)

ASSAY OFFICE, NEWHALL STREET / CHARLOTTE STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1963)

METCHLEY GRANGE MUNICIPAL ESTATE, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Alice Nolan (2017)



Brian Burnett (2017)



Albert Blakeway (2017)



Hanny Foxhall (2017)

HARBORNE LANE, SELLY OAK



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

SELLY MANOR, BOURNVILLE



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

MOSELEY ROAD, HIGHGATE



Phyllis Nicklin (1954)

HOUSE IN MOSELEY ROAD, HIGHGATE



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Helen Lewis (2017)



Kay Emblen-Perry (2017)



Rob Allen (2017)



Rob Allen (2017)

STONE HENGE CROFT, DRUIDS HEATH



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Steve Sorroll (2017)

FACTORY ROAD, HANDSWORTH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Tom Samad (2017)

LENCHES TRUST ALMSHOUSES, FIVE WAYS, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Pete Davies (2017)

METCHLEY GRANGE ESTATE, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Lyndon Townsend (2017)

## INDUSTRIES, BIRMINGHAM CANAL, LADYWOOD



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



David Roberts (2017)

WEOLEY HILL, SELLY OAK



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Pete Davies (2017)

KINGS NORTON PARK



Phyllis Nicklin (1963)



Peter Reynolds (2017)

KINGSTON ROW



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



David Moore (2017)

LAW COURTS, CORPORATION STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1969)



Graham Evans (2017)

BATH STREET, GUN QUARTER



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Malcolm Veitch (2017)

CLAINES ROAD, NORTHFIELD



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

CALTHORPE ROAD, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

ST. PETER'S CHURCH AND BELL INN, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)

BOURNVILLE VILLAGE GREEN



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Hanny Foxhall (2017)



Nic Patchett (2017)



Lyndon Townsend (2017)



Rob Allen (2017)

NEW FLATS AND LOXTON STREET SCHOOL, DUDDESTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)

NORTH OF BELLS LANE, DRUIDS HEATH ESTATE



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

ALBERT ROAD, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1961)

METCHLEY ABBEY, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (undated)



Philip Jackson (2017)



John Hill (2017)



Albert Blakeway (2017)



Peter Allen (2017)

## VILLAGE POUND AND GREAT STONE INN, NORTHFIELD



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)



Jay Mason-Burns (2017)

STRATFORD PLACE (C.1601), BORDESLEY / CAMP HILL



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Phil Lumby (2017)

THE OLD CROWN, HEATH MILL LANE, DERITEND



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Maggie Bucknall (2017)

OLD SQUARE, PRIORY RINGWAY



Phyllis Nicklin (1969)



Catherine Peakman (2017)

HAY HALL, REDFERN ROAD, TYSELEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



David Moore (2017)

**BULLOCK STREET, NECHELLS GREEN**



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

**RIVER STREET, DERITEND**



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

**ASTON UNIVERSITY, GOSTA GREEN**



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

**LUDGATE HILL, JEWELLERY QUARTER**



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Philip Jackson (2017)



Cara Green (2017)



Alistair Evans (2017)



Dave Allen (2017)

## SOHO ROAD, NEAR BOULTON ROAD, HANDSWORTH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Philip Jackson (2017)

JAMES ROAD, OFF KINGS ROAD, TYSELEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



David Moore (2017)

GUN BARREL PROOFING HOUSE, BANBURY STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Wali Taylor (2017)

THE REA BRIDGE AT WEST HEATH ROAD, NORTHFIELD



Phyllis Nicklin (1963)

VILLAGE CENTRE, CASTLE BROMWICH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

SOHO HILL, HANDSWORTH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

CANNON HILL PARK



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Mark Burge (2017)



Alice Nolan (2017)



Narinder Chahal (2017)



Karen Allen (2017)



**CONTINUITY & CHANGE**

GEC WORKS AND CAR PARK, ELECTRIC AVENUE, FROM TAME ROAD, WITTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Albert Blakeway (2017)

ROTTON PARK STREET, LADYWOOD



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

GAS STREET CANAL



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)

METCHLEY LANE, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)

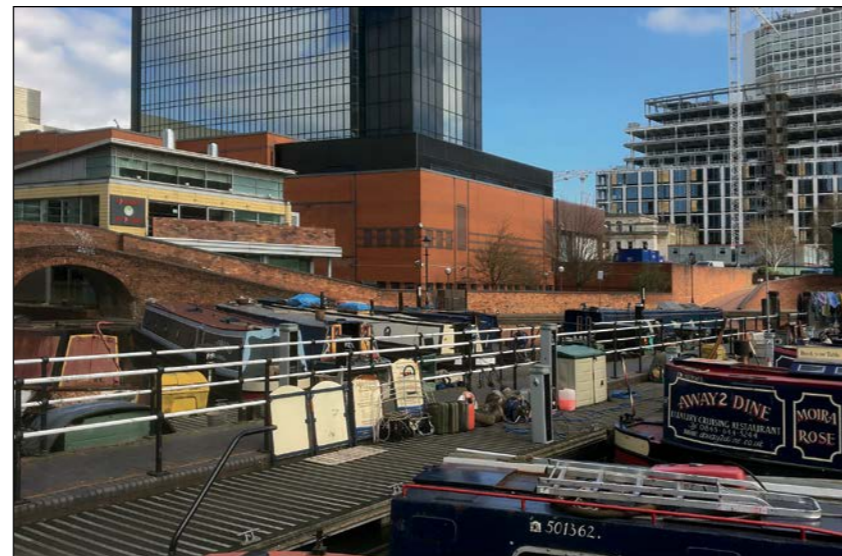
CLEVEDON ROAD, BALSALL HEATH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Graham Evans (2017)



Mark Burge (2017)



Catherine Peakman (2017)



Jackie Hodgson (2017)

LONGMORE STREET, HIGHGATE



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

LAWRENCE STREET (RYDER STREET AREA)



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

KINGSTON ROW, EDWARD STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)

MOAT LANE, ROTUNDA AND ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Gary Izzard (2017)



Darren Campbell (2017)



Georgie Evans (2017)



Karen Allen (2017)

AUSTIN CAR STORAGE PARK, LONGBRIDGE



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



John Pullan (2017)

AUSTIN MOTOR WORKS, LICKEY ROAD, LONGBRIDGE



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

AUSTIN MOTOR WORKS, LICKEY ROAD, LONGBRIDGE



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

GREAT COLMORE STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1953)

BBC MIDLAND REGION HQ, CARPENTER ROAD, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Peter Turner (2017)



John Pullan (2017)



Keith Dixon (2017)



Philip Jackson (2017)

## THE GROVE, HARBORNE

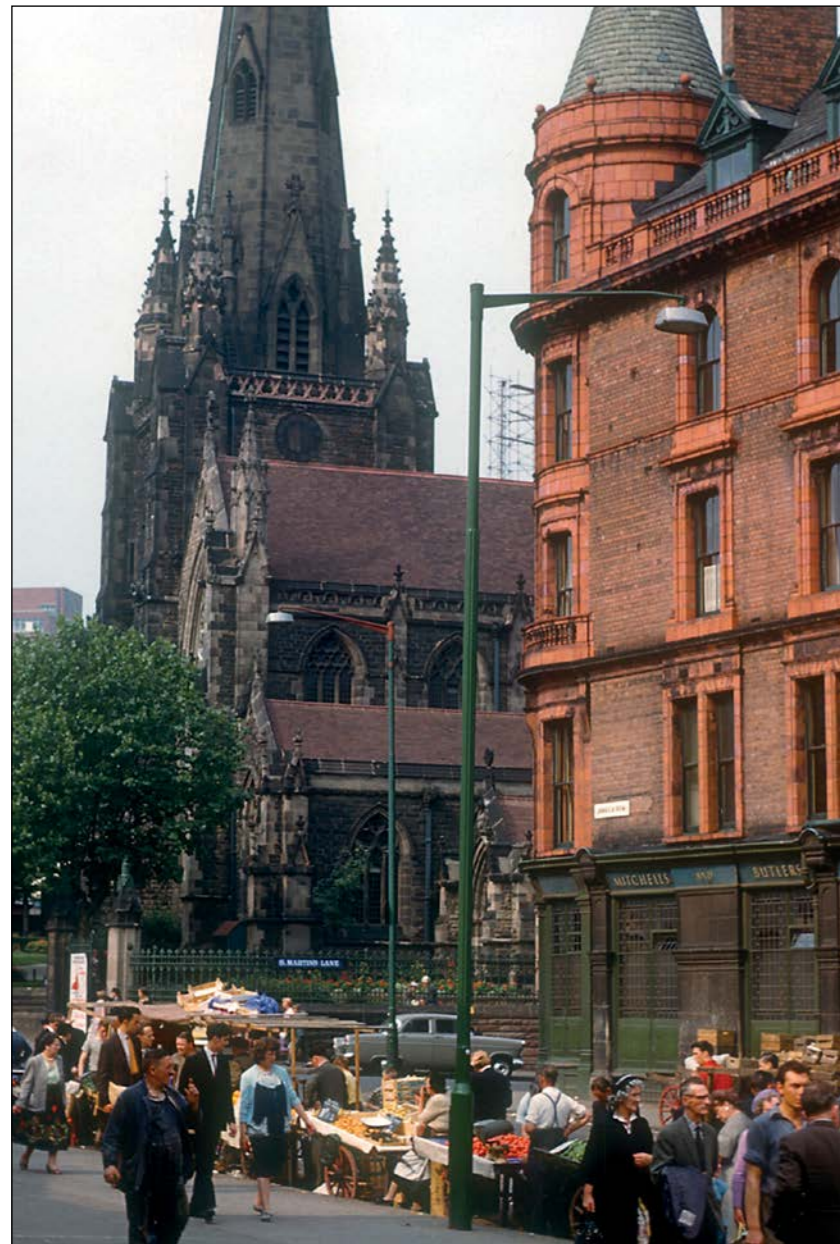


Phyllis Nicklin (1962)



Lyndon Townsend (2017)

JAMAICA ROW



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Michael Bell (2017)

BATH STREET, SHADWELL STREET CORNER, GUN QUARTER



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Malcolm Veitch (2017)

**NORTH ROAD AND GRANGE ROAD, HARBORNE**



Phyllis Nicklin (1961)

**1-5, HAWTHORNE ROAD, EDGBASTON**



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)

**VIEW EAST, TANGMERE DRIVE, CASTLE VALE**



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

**CAMBRIDGE STREET**



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Lyndon Townsend (2017)



Simon Felton (2017)



Helen Nolan (2017)



Alistair Evans (2017)

VIEW EAST FROM BROMFORD LANE BRIDGE, TAME VALLEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

THE GOLDEN CROSS PUBLIC HOUSE, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1961)

CORNER OF SHERLOCK STREET AND MOSELEY STREET



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

SHOPPING CENTRE AND FLATS, NEWTOWN



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Brian Burnett (2017)



Wendy Edwards (2017)



Phil Lumby (2017)



Lizzy Thornhill (2017)

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL FROM HARBORNE LANE



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

HYDE ROAD, LADYWOOD



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

ANDERTON'S YARD, WHITTALL STREET, GUN QUARTER



Phyllis Nicklin (1963)



Peter Lovatt (2017)



David Roberts (2017)



Afraa Din (2017)

DEAN STREET, CENTRAL BIRMINGHAM



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Rob Perry-Griffiths (2017)

OLD HOUSES, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, NEWTOWN



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Dave Allen (2017)

SPICEAL STREET, THE BULLRING



Phyllis Nicklin (1959)

THE BULLRING MARKET



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

349-353 HIGH STREET, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1961)

348 HIGH STREET, HARBORNE



Phyllis Nicklin (1961)



Gary Izzard (2017)



Dave Allen (2017)



Chris Burrows (2017)



Kay Emblen-Perry (2017)

BALSALL HEATH ROAD



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Jerry Tew (2017)

ANDERTON STREET TERRACES, LADYWOOD



Phyllis Nicklin (1962)

LADYWOOD, VIEW TOWARDS CITY CENTRE



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

GAS WORKS DEMOLITION, NECHELLS GREEN



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

CHEAPSIDE FROM MOSELEY ROAD, HIGHGATE



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)



Malcolm Veitch (2017)



Jay Mason-Burns (2017)



Geoff Dowling (2017)



Phil Lumby (2017)

PARADISE CIRCUS AREA



Phyllis Nicklin (1969)

ROTUNDA VIEW TOWARDS ST. PAUL'S CHURCH



Phyllis Nicklin (1966)

OLD CRESCENT THEATRE, BIRMINGHAM



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

ST. PETER'S CHURCH, CENTRAL BIRMINGHAM



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Georgie Evans (2017)



Sofia Johnston (2017)



Eugene Farrell (2017)



Geoff Dowling (2017)

BSA (ARIEL) ARMOURY ROAD, SMALL HEATH



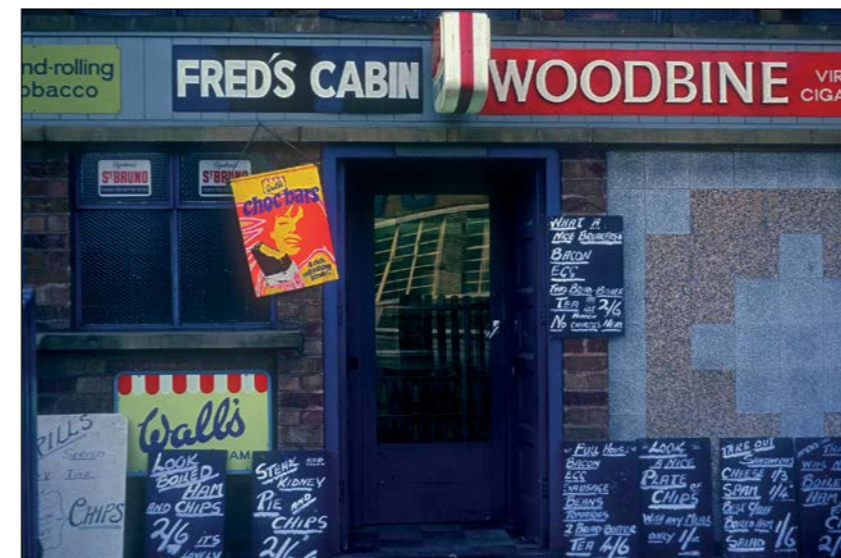
Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

BXL FACTORY, REDFERN ROAD, TYSELEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

'FRED'S CABIN', KINGS ROAD, TYSELEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

VIEW NW ALONG WESTERN REGION LINE, TYSELEY



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Brian Burnett (2017)



David Moore (2017)



Abigail Wills (2017)



Robyn Allen (2017)

**GAS STREET BOAT SHOW**



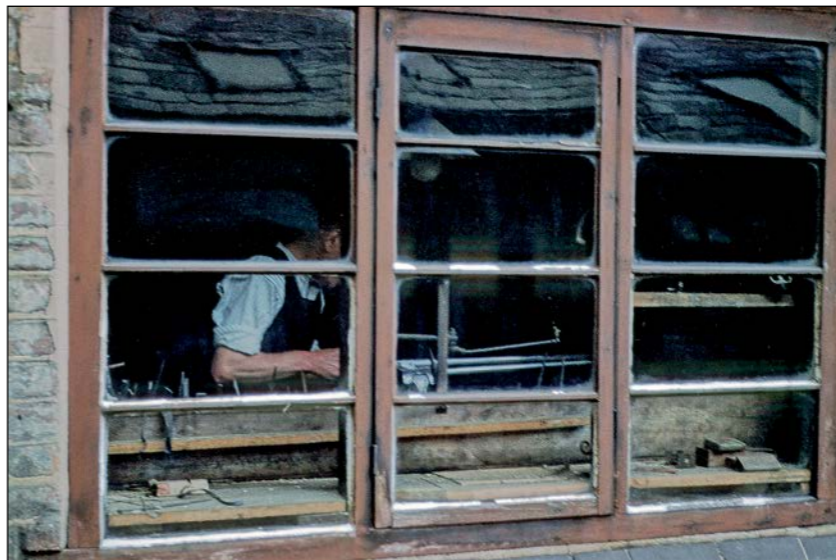
Phyllis Nicklin (1962)

**BULLRING / ROTUNDA DEVELOPMENT**



Phyllis Nicklin (1963)

**GUNSMITH'S WORKSHOP, ST. MARY'S ROW, GUN QUARTER**



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

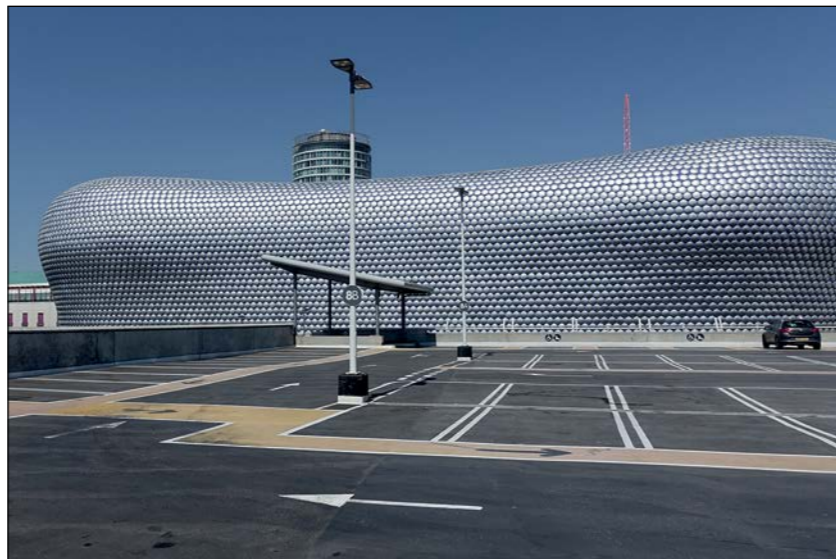
**VYSE STREET, JEWELLERY QUARTER**



Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



David Moore (2017)



Dave Allen (2017)



Teresa Dolan (2017)



Ron Carter (2017)

BRADFORD STREET, DERITEND



Phyllis Nicklin (1954)



Phil Lumby (2017)

BBC MIDLAND HQ, PEBBLE MILL ROAD, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

PRINCIP STREET, GUN QUARTER



Phyllis Nicklin (1960)

WARWICKSHIRE CRICKET GROUND, EDGBASTON



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

BELL'S FARM, BELL'S LANE, KING'S NORTON



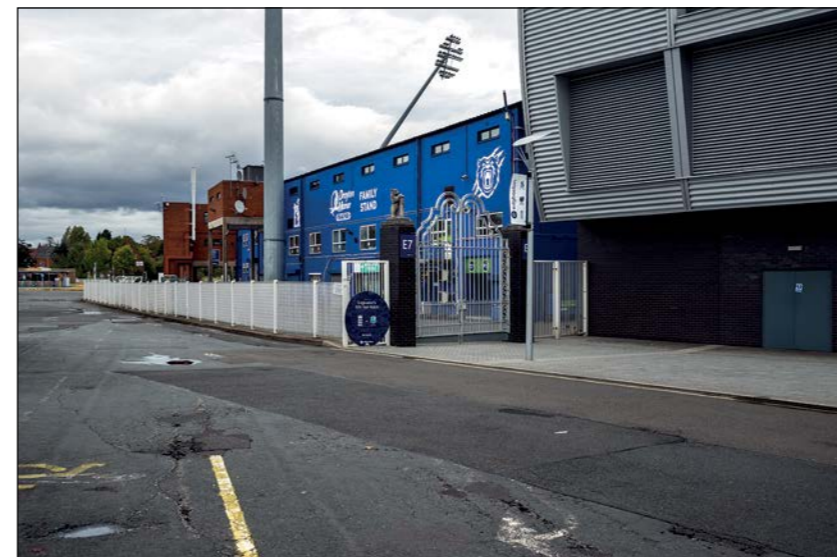
Phyllis Nicklin (1967)



Peter Allen (2017)



Malcolm Veitch (2017)



Pete Davies (2017)



Brian Burnett (2017)

THE TOWN HALL



Phyllis Nicklin (undated)

LONGMORE STREET, BALSALL HEATH



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)

ANGELINA STREET, BALSALL HEATH



Phyllis Nicklin (1957)

SHERLOCK STREET, NEAR JAMAICA ROW, BIRMINGHAM



Phyllis Nicklin (1968)



Georgie Evans (2017)



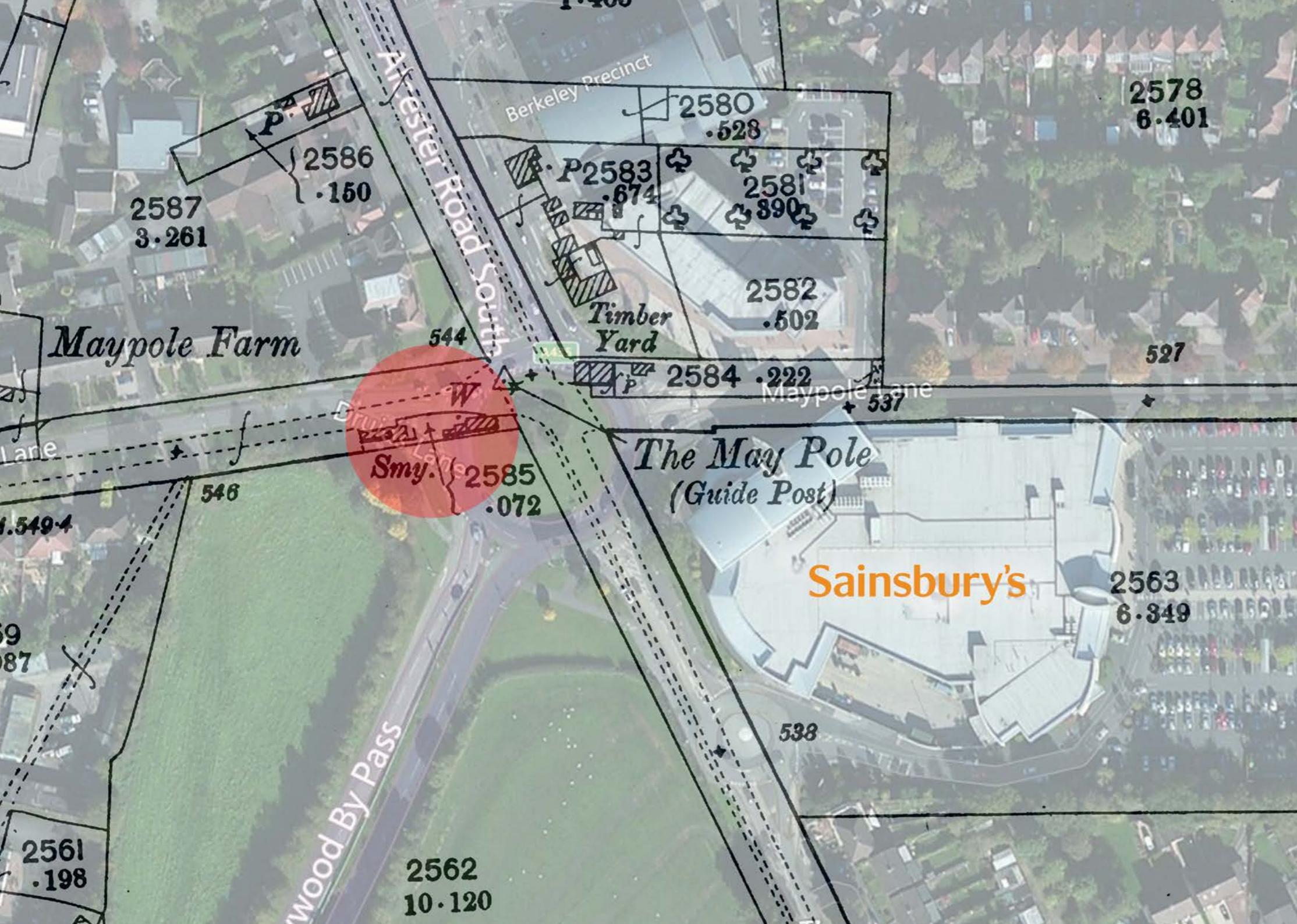
Jerry Tew (2017)



Dave Allen (2017)



Eugene Farrell (2017)



## USING MAPS, MAYPOLE ISLAND

Birmingham's development meant that many of Phyllis Nicklin's locations had changed beyond recognition. The photographers often used old and new maps overlaid to see where they should go to take their photographs. Some came to The Library of Birmingham, while others used side-by-side georeferenced maps, available online from the National Library of Scotland.

For Shoeing Forge, Druids Lane, Alcester Road, Brian Burnett used an extract from an old map overlaid with a current map which shows the present position of the forge's location. You can see where the forge was positioned at the junction of Druids Lane with the Alcester Road. Today the forge and house would cross the Alcester Road and into the Maypole Island itself. In the original picture there is a house in the distance, to the right of the forge. This house still stands and can just be seen in the new photo to the right of the Sainsbury's store.



## SHOEING FORGE, DRUIDS LANE, ALCESTER ROAD, MAYPOLE



Phyllis Nicklin (1959)



Brian Burnett (2017)

# PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

2nd April 2017	Project launch meeting at Moseley Road School of Art. Photography begins.
3rd September 2017	Interim meeting at Moseley Road School of Art.
31st December 2017	Photography complete.
16th January 2018	Meet the Artist talk at The Gunmakers Arms Bath Street.
27th January 2018	Exhibition of 30 photographs, The Gunmakers Arms.
27th June 2018	Brummagem Magazine Issue 208 contains an article about the project.
13th July 2018	Private View at The Library of Birmingham.
14th July 2018	The Library of Birmingham Exhibition opens to the public.
18th July 2018	BBC Website - <i>Phyllis Nicklin: Views of Birmingham recaptured 50 years on.</i>
19th July 2018	Tom Epps promotes the exhibition on BBC Midlands Today.
15th September 2018	Exhibition closes having attracted 3186 visitors.
5th May 2019	Exhibition reprised at Moseley Community Hub as its inaugural show.



Project launch meeting 2.4.2017



Dave Allen, Pete James and Jerry Tew at the interim meeting 3.9.2017



# GUNMAKERS ARMS

Exhibition, January 2018



**IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PHYLLIS...**

# **EXHIBITION**

**THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM**

**JULY - SEPTEMBER 2018**





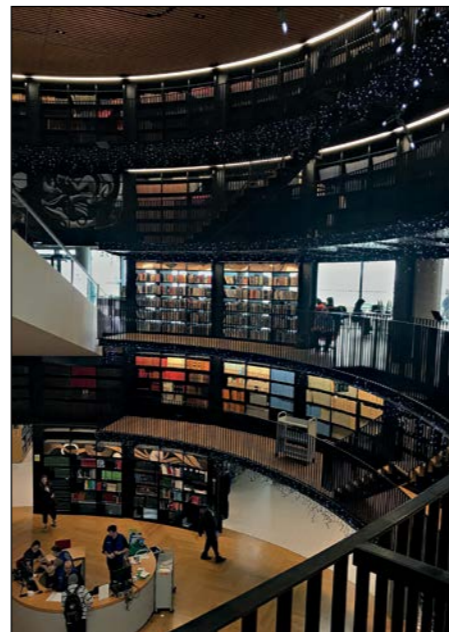
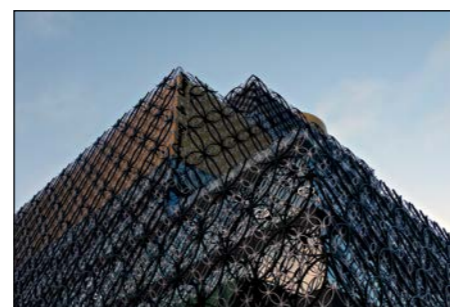


**IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PHYLLIS...  
THE BIRMINGHAM PHOTOGRAPHIC GRID PROJECT**

**EXHIBITION PRIVATE VIEW INVITATION**

**7.30 PM FRIDAY 13TH JULY 2018**

**THE GALLERY | LEVEL 3 | THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM**



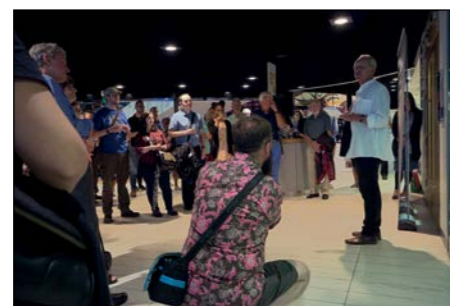
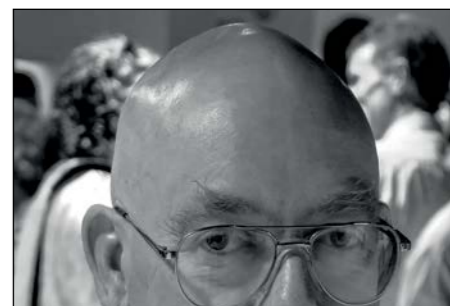
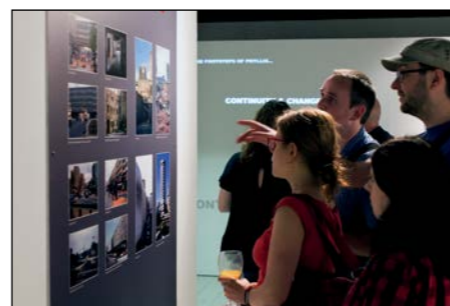
**THE GRID PROJECT**

**IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PHYLLIS...**

EXHIBITION | THE GALLERY | LEVEL 3

HALF A CENTURY AGO PHYLLIS NICKLIN PHOTOGRAPHED BIRMINGHAM. A TEAM OF PHOTOGRAPHERS WENT BACK TO LOOK AGAIN AT THE SAME PLACES...

SATURDAY 14TH JULY - SATURDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER 2018





Photography by John Hill, Karen Allen, Ron Carter, Wali Taylor, Bruce Sabin and Dave Allen

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, to the 71 photographers, thank you for taking part. We've made a little statement about the Birmingham environment in 2017 and it's on the record.

Trevor Beattie has supported The Grid Project for a long time now. He made this big exhibition, in a prestigious venue, a reality. Thanks fella, this was our finest moment.

Jerry Tew joined me for some of the presentations but importantly has maintained a dialogue that goes back to our first venture together in 2007, helping to shape the Grid Project overall. During and since this project, Wali Taylor has become a primary collaborator. His role in the installation of the exhibition was a crucial one.

The Nicklin photographs are kept at the University of Birmingham Library. My big thanks go to Research Repository Advisor Patricia Herterich for making the access I needed so easy.

The gallery at the Library of Birmingham is the best exhibition space I've worked in and is managed by Tom Epps. He was a true pleasure to work with and his guidance was completely reliable. Numerous others helped me install and remove the show, including Jay Mason-Burns, Georgie Evans, John Hill, Brian Burnett, Abigail Wills and Prue Evans.

Thanks to Darren Campbell and everyone at The Gunmakers Arms for their help when installing the exhibition there, and to Pete Davies for introducing us in the first place.

The WASPS (We All Shoot Photos) group made a significant input from the very start and their skilful involvement was very much appreciated.

Although Moseley Road School of Art closed in 1975, ex-students contributed a large number of pictures and it was a delight to be welcomed into the building - reborn as The Moseley Community Hub - for its inaugural exhibition. Business Manager David Peebles went out of his way to ensure the whole venture went smoothly.

At all of the events, on every job, at home or on the road, Karen Allen has been by my side...

Dave Allen 2019



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

REWRITING THE BOOK  
THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM

GUNMAKERS  
ARMS



MOSELEY ROAD  
SCHOOL OF ART



# THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Abigail Wills	Georgie Evans	Lyndon Townsend	Rob Allen
Afraa Din	Graham Evans	Maggie Bucknall	Rob Perry-Griffiths
Albert Blakeway	Hanny Foxhall	Malcolm Veitch	Robyn Allen
Alice Nolan	Helen Lewis	Mark Burge	Ron Carter
Alistair Evans	Helen Nolan	Michael Bell	Simon Felton
Brian Burnett	Isobel Mason-Burns	Narinder Chahal	Sofia Johnston
Cara Green	Jackie Hodgson	Nic Patchett	Steve Sorroll
Catherine Peakman	James Allen	Nick Greenwood	Steven Nolan
Chris Burrows	Jay Mason-Burns	Paul Bartlett	Stuart Pittwood
Daan Bijdevaate	Jerry Tew	Pete Davies	Sunrise Lovatt
Darren Campbell	John Hill	Peter Allen	Teresa Dolan
Dave Allen	John Mackay	Peter Lovatt	Tom Samad
David Moore	John Pullan	Peter Reynolds	Tony Bucknall
David Roberts	John Timmins	Peter Turner	Trevor Beattie
Eugene Farrell	Karen Allen	Phil Edwards	Wali Taylor
Gary Izzard	Kay Emblen-Perry	Phil Lumby	Wendy Edwards
Geoff Dowling	Keith Dixon	Philip Jackson	Wendy Miller
George Daley	Lizzy Thornhill	Prue Evans	<i>Total participants 71</i>

**[WWW.THEGRIDPROJECT.ORG.UK](http://WWW.THEGRIDPROJECT.ORG.UK)**