



**THE MOSELEY SOCIETY**

Formed to protect a unique area of Birmingham

Charity No. 512211



## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

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**Chris Sutton:** Moseley Exchange, 149-153 Alcester Road, Moseley B13 8JP **Tel:** 0121 449 8585 **Email:** [vcgcbham@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:vcgcbham@yahoo.co.uk)

**Web:** [www.moseleyhistory.co.uk](http://www.moseleyhistory.co.uk)

**This month we are looking at a house which has been home to two different groups who have come to Moseley...**

### **Park Life by Dharmashura**



Park Road was laid out, it seems, in 1849, possibly along an old track beside the park wall. The house at 11 Park Road was probably built in the early 1860s. In an agreement dated October 1863 William Taylor of Moseley Hall leased 'Piercefield', 11 Park Road (*left*) to John Abbott for 99 years at £13 10s a year.

William Francis Taylor, born 1829 or 1830 (baptised in St Mary's, Moseley 11 February 1830), son of James and Ann, was the great-grandson of John Taylor (also of Moseley

Hall, among other estates), co-founder of Taylor's and Lloyd's Bank in Birmingham (which became Lloyds Bank).

While he owned Moseley Hall (inherited, I think, in 1852 from his father) and its park (landscaped after suggestions made by Humphrey Repton), William Taylor doesn't seem to have lived there since childhood. 'Piercefield' seems to have been named after the estate of that name in Monmouthshire, laid out in the 1750s by its owner, Valentine Morris (son of a wealthy sugar planter in the Caribbean). The house passed through several owners until Henry William Carter took ownership.

Carter, a former commercial traveller, died intestate in August 1950 his house at number 11 Park Road, named "Piercefield" was sold by his estate. It went, in 1952, for £2,250 to the orthodox New Synagogue. The New Synagogue was first established in Hurst Street in 1920, having replaced an earlier one in Holloway Head (now a Masonic Lodge) which had been registered in 1894. The Jewish community had originally been settled around the inner ring areas of Birmingham but by the 1950s had spread considerably out into the suburbs. It was in reflection of this that the New Synagogue relocated to Moseley. Some rebuilding was done to make the building fit for purpose;

proceedings got under way with the laying of the foundation stone (*below left*) on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1953 by one P. Newman.



The Jewish population continued though to spread out and thus decline as a large group in any particular area. As a consequence in 1996 the New Synagogue agreed a merger with the Birmingham Hebrew Congregation – the intention being to construct a new building at King David's school, and vacate 11 Park Road. Park Road was sold in 1997 for £230,000 [indirectly] to Friends of the World Buddhist Order (Midlands), now known as Tiratna Buddhist Order, for use as the new Birmingham Buddhist Centre. The Birmingham Buddhist Centre itself is a part of the Tiratna Order which was founded in 1967 by Sangharakshita who lives in Moseley. In September 2012 crowds gathered for a grand re-opening as was reported and photographed by our own William Baldwin:

*"The head of the Centre in Moseley cut the ribbon on its new entrance way to rousing cheers of "sadhu" from more than 100 onlookers, marking the end of three years of major refurbishment. The city's Buddhists and members of the interfaith community gathered at the Park Hill centre to hear president Dharmachari Paramartha (below) praise the work of everyone who contributed, before leading call and response prayers to bless the new entrance hall. Paramartha told the gathering that he hoped the new entrance would open doors to the wider community."*



## **EVENING TALK**

**March 27<sup>th</sup> 7:30 in the Red Room at Moseley Exchange**

'John Avins - An unheralded Nineteenth-Century Moseley Philanthropist' *by Janet Berry*

Janet has done a huge amount of research into Avins. He 'retired' to Highfield House, Church Road, Moseley in 1858, upscaled his philanthropy to match his new status as a gentleman, deeply involved himself in St Mary's Church and the local political scene, developed housing in Moseley, held significant business positions and traded in stocks and shares.