

MOSELEY PUBS HERITAGE TRAIL

Start at the crossroads in the centre and walk on the left side of Alcester Road northwards towards the city centre.

The One Trick Pony Club (formerly 'O'Neill's')

The pub and adjacent buildings were previously a carriage hire business (Moseley Park Mews Cab and Car Co.) with multi-storey stabling for horses at the rear, incorporating an unusual horse lift to transport horses to and from the upper storey. Traces of the individual stalls and the wheel which operated the horse lift still remained when the stables were demolished in 1997. The buildings also included a veterinary surgeon's and subsequently became Park Garage before conversion to a pub, O'Neill's. The pub was recently renamed the One Trick Pony Club, presumed to be a reference to the building's historic stables.

Cross Chantry Road and continue along Alcester Road as far as the junction with Park Road.

The former Jug of Ale (now the Tipu Sultan restaurant)

This building was once a pub called the Regent Court and subsequently the Regent. According to unconfirmed local reports it appears to have opened in the early 1960s and to have been converted from two large old houses, possibly of 1930s origin. In the early 1990s it was renamed the Jug of Ale and became a popular live music venue, playing host to up-and-coming bands such as Oasis and The Verve. There was considerable local opposition to the Scottish and Newcastle brewery company's decision to close the pub in 2008 and sell the site for redevelopment. It was eventually bought by a chain of Indian restaurants which extended the building to create the existing Tipu Sultan restaurant.

Cross Alcester Road and retrace your steps back towards the centre of Moseley.

The Prince of Wales

The pub was built around 1840 and rebuilt before 1888. It has a traditional pub interior that has changed little since 1900 and is noted for its wide range of real ales. It still retains its public bar and two smoke rooms, with an original tiled hallway and large rear garden bar. Before the First World War the pub had not only a darts team but also its own shooting club. J.R.R. Tolkien used to drink here with his girlfriend in secret in the rear smoke room out of sight of her mother (his landlady at his lodgings) who disapproved of their relationship.

Continue along Alcester Road, turn left into Woodbridge Road and walk down as far as Trafalgar Road.

The Patrick Kavanagh

This was originally The Trafalgar Hotel, built in 1870 following the opening of the nearby Moseley railway station. Note the stained glass windows downstairs, the engraved billiard room windows upstairs, the polychrome brickwork and low-pitched slate roof, all typical features of the architecture of the time. It was originally owned by a wealthy landowner W. Dyke Wilkinson, known as "the man who bought up Moseley". The pub had a bowling green and there was a skating rink at the rear, opened in 1875. (Skating was a very popular activity at the end of the 19th C and other local venues included Moseley Hall pool, Swanshurst Park pool and Coldbath Pool). The Moseley Liberal Association was founded here in 1874 and met here regularly thereafter, whilst The Fighting Cocks was the favoured venue for the Conservative Association (founded in the same year 1874).

The pub was renamed The Patrick Kavanagh after the Irish poet in about 1998 as part of a major refurbishment.

An original beer bottle from the pub, embossed with the words "Peter Walker & Co., Trafalgar Hotel, Moseley" and a bowling trophy inscribed "Prize Cup presented to the best Bowler on Trafalgar Hotel green, Moseley, Oct. 1868" still survive in the Moseley Society Local History Group's collection.

Retrace your steps to Alcester Road and turn left towards the centre of Moseley.

The Fighting Cocks

A pub has occupied this spot since 1750 when it was originally called the 'Fox and Dogs'. It developed out of a village inn known as The Red Lion, once owned by Richard Greavis of Moseley Hall. The 'Fighting Cocks' was first built in 1778 and then rebuilt as a large hotel with grounds by Holt's Brewery in 1860. The name 'fighting cocks' derives from the use of the building for cock fighting, often carried out on Boxing Day, a practice that was made illegal in 1835. There is a record of a cock fighting tournament taking place here on 26 December 1759 between the gentlemen of Warwickshire and Worcestershire, involving 15 cocks on each side, with a first prize of £10 for the eventual winner.

The present building in terra-cotta brick and stone was constructed in 1899 by Holt's Brewery and opened on 6 December. It was designed by Newton and Cheadle, its exterior heavily influenced by the Glaswegian architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The frontage is of three storeys in keeping with the shops while the side elevation scales down to two in line with the houses in King Edward Road (built at the same time but, as the name shows, not completed until after the death of Queen Victoria). The Tower on the corner containing a large clock and weather vane rises to a height of 72 ft. An anemometer and a barometer inside the dome formerly transmitted weather information to dials on the corner of the building at street level (still surviving today). The interior was spectacular

with a tiled public bar, a billiard room and two walnut panelled smoke rooms. Much of this was lost in a 1980s refurbishment but the tiled public bar and two painted panels of local scenes (including one showing the previous pub building) have fortunately survived until the present day. There appears to be the remains of a brewhouse in the garden behind the pub.

In the 19th C the Fighting Cocks was a superior meeting place for the gentry whilst the Bulls Head was regarded as a no-frills ale house for working villagers. A meeting to establish the Conservative Association for Moseley & Kings Heath & Balsall Heath took place here on 22 April 1874, with John Arnold Esq as president and the association met here regularly thereafter. In 1829 the pub was the scene of a protest meeting against the Catholic Emancipation Act. Justices of the Peace sat here at the local Magistrates Courts and Revision courts were held here to correct lists of voters until about 1885 when the parish offices in Woodbridge Road were erected. It was also the regular meeting place and annual dinner venue of The Moseley Book Club, which included among its membership Matthew Boulton's son (also Matthew), who lived at Wake Green from 1836 to 1841. A coach ran from here to Birmingham three days a week from 1815 onwards, leaving at 10.00 am and returning at 4.00 pm for a fare of 2s/6d. Following the 1860 rebuild, the pub had large formal gardens at the rear, tea gardens and a bowling green, superseded by a bandstand and a running track. Tobogganing was introduced in the grounds on 18 September 1886. The Moseley Quoit and Bowling Club met here for some 90 years from the 1870s until its demise in the 1960s.

Continue on to the village green at the crossroads and turn left up St Mary's Row

The Bulls Head

This is the oldest pub site in Moseley dating back to 1700. Thomas Blakemore was the licensee in the mid 18th C when the pub, like all local establishments, brewed its own beer. Parish meetings were held here in the period 1795 to 1810, presided over by Mr William Villiers, a Birmingham magistrate who lived in Moseley. The present building dates from the 1880s.

The adjacent building with a grand archway was once a horse-drawn cab depot which incorporated vehicle storage and mews facilities. The mews were later used by Gascoigne's the undertakers who owned the premises opposite (now The Elizabeth of York pub). The cab stand was located on the Green and provided transport for passengers to and from the nearby railway station. The building later became an architectural antiques shop and is now the Deolali restaurant.

Turn to face the buildings opposite

The Elizabeth of York

The building was formerly the premises of Gascoigne's the undertakers and incorporated an archway leading through to stables at the rear. The top of the original archway is still visible above the left hand ground floor window of the current pub.

Elizabeth of York, whose name was used for the pub, was the wife of Henry VII and allegedly donated the land on the opposite side of St Mary's Row for the building of St Mary's church in 1494.

Return to the crossroads and face the buildings on the opposite corner

The Bohemian

This was once the site of a tram depot with stabling for the horses. A regular horse-drawn tram service was introduced between Moseley and Birmingham in 1859, replaced by steam trams from 1867 and by electrically powered trams in 1906. This was the terminus of the tram route from the city centre and the lines looped back round the Green with a spur into the depot.

The current building dates from 1906 and was originally constructed as the offices of the Tramways Company with shops on the ground floor. One of these shops in the 1940s and 50s was Walwyns, one of two shops in Birmingham that supplied children with Clarke's shoes. The big draw was their X-ray machine which they used to ensure a perfect fit, before it was dropped due to health and safety concerns. Later the shops became a car showroom (proprietor: David S Dunnett) and then a branch of the TSB. It was relatively recently converted to a pub, which first operated under the name of The Junction, then Hogshead and now The Bohemian.

Cross St Mary's Row and walk southwards along Alcester Road away from the crossroads

The Village

This building, which dates from 1894, was originally the Moseley Gentlemen's Club, a licensed establishment with its own billiard room.

Double back along Alcester Road to return to your starting point at the crossroads.