

Moseley Tennis Club

by Diane Hirst and Heather Frazier

“But Moseley Tennis Club is still going strong,” do I hear you saying? Yes, certainly the Club in Billesley Lane is flourishing, but it only changed its name from Billesley Club to Moseley, I’m guessing, about thirty years ago or perhaps earlier. The original Moseley Club was in School Road, now the playground/sports field for Moseley C of E School. The entrance was in School Road and the wooden pavilion was just inside the fence. Most of the courts were grass, there were five of them; two sets of two courts in tandem and one single one----“the cage”. There were also two shale courts. It was a prestigious Club to which many local families belonged. The Gowers, I remember and also the Angells. They played only friendly matches and did not join the local leagues. Every August Bank Holiday weekend (then at the *beginning* of August), an excellent Open Tournament was held at the Club. This attracted some top players of the time, I distinctly remember Virginia Wade taking part, this must have been in the early sixties, many years before her Wimbledon singles win in 1977. Heather remembers the two Durose sisters who came in a Rolls Royce from Derby every day to play in this tournament!

The ladies' (I don't know anything about the other one!) changing room was redolent of an earlier era. When I visited the Wimbledon Museum including a “mock up” changing room, I immediately thought of the one at the old Moseley Club—lots of wooden fixtures with a deep set-in wash basin.

In 1968 Moseley and Newton Club in Belle Walk, where the coach was Stan Pannell, sold their land to link up with Olton Club in St Bernard's Road to create the very much larger West Warwickshire Club. The prime movers in this immense operation were Mike Gosney, John Gower and John Mann. I understand that a goodly amount of the turf from Moseley Club was transferred to West Warwicks as it was “the best”. Now the space once occupied by the original Moseley Tennis Club provides an excellent playing space and sports field for the school.

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