



THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Caring for an historic area of Birmingham

Charity no. 512211

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Winter 2015 Newsletter Christmas Lights

An afternoon of entertainment on Saturday December 5.



Those of you who braved the strong gusts were rewarded with Dancers from the Swing Era, The City of Birmingham Brass Band and several choirs, including the Choir with No Name, warming the gathering up for Christmas. As it got dark, comedian Joe Lycett was carried aloft by members of the Moseley Rugby Club for the countdown to the switching on of the lights. Thanks to the dedicated organisers and their considerable money raising efforts through Crowdfunding and local donations there are more lights than ever this year to brighten up the festive season.

Moseley Society Meetings

Our autumn programme began with Heritage Open Day on Sunday September 13. We welcomed around 700 visitors who signed in at the various sites on the trail through the park.

In October, Dr. Richenda Roberts gave a talk on several artists involved in proactive pacifism during the First World War.

The November talk was by Andrew Hamilton on the story of a lost generation who died in WW1.

Our next gathering at the Moseley Exchange is the Quiz Night on January 15. To enter or seek members, get in touch with the Secretary.

Local History Group

The move of the local history archives to the United Services Club in Church Road has been completed and there is usually someone there on Thursday mornings between 10 and 12, but it is advisable to email to check.

moseleyhistory@moseleyexchange.com

Meanwhile Edwina Rees has been researching and writing up the stories behind the names that appear on St Mary's Church WW1 memorial for 1915. They can be read online in the Local History section of the website:

www.moseley-society.org.uk

The next visit arranged by the group was to the Franklin Bequest at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery on December 8. Only small groups can visit this wonderful collection of Chinese ceramics and art work, but it is hoped that another visit will be arranged for members of the Moseley Society in the New Year.



Andrew Franklin was a British Consul General and was posted to China, where he lived for many years acquiring a vast knowledge of the art and culture of the country. Edwina Rees

is still working with Andrew Franklin's daughter Anne on a comprehensive article on his life, how the collection came about and why Birmingham was the lucky recipient.

Other plans in the New Year include a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum and a return to King Edward's School to see the next stage of their WW1 centenary exhibition.

Dovecote

In the approach to winter, a good deal of work has been done in the Dovecote garden. The regular team has been joined by Gill and Dave McGillivray. The meadow has been scythed and sown with wild flower seeds and the non-compostable garden waste shredded. A decision has been made to replace some of the rose bushes that have become too large. There was quite a battle to remove the old roses, fought and won by regular volunteer Bez.

If you would like Christmas Cards featuring the Dovecote in the snow, get in touch with the Secretary. We also have copies of the Architectural poster, which would make a nice gift.

Planning and changes in Moseley Village

As you may have heard a planning application has gone in for the development of **120 Alcester Road**, the vacant site next to the Prince of Wales. The plans are for two buildings with 46 residential apartments with commercial units on the ground floor. The Landlord of the Prince of Wales has expressed his concern that the occupiers of flats overlooking the pub garden will complain about the noise and inflict restrictions on the pub's activities. We have always, and will continue to ask for this site to be for mixed use, which would include offices as well as the retail use and some residential units.

An application from Costa Coffee to change the use of the former Barclays Bank building at **19 St Mary's Row** is seen as a real threat to our independent coffee shops in Moseley. There are few planning grounds to use to object to the application and the best way to protect our independent coffee shops is to continue to support them. And there are still independent shops like the **Painted Room** which have lovely things for the home, which don't sell coffee and need our support.

However, the fate of one such business is causing much concern. The owners of **Pottery and Pieces** wish to retire and so

the business and property is up for auction.

The Bull's Head is opening as the Cuban Embassy bringing rum cocktails, Latin American food and live music into Moseley.

Riley's Snooker Hall above the Co-Op has been empty for a while, but Chris Poole of Shades Music is hoping to turn it into a live music venue. He is going to do a full volume sound test and welcomes anyone with concerns to pop into Shades Music for 'a cuppa'.

Lab Forte - a new hair salon - opened in October. Alex Thomas is known to several Moseley residents as he has worked in businesses in the city for over 20 years. He has now decided to set up on his own in our midst. He can be found next to the Dance Studio.

Meteor Ford Site

The planning application for the 'minor material amendment' was considered by Planning Committee on September 17. Negotiations with M&S were supposed to have been completed by now.

Footway Maintenance work

Work is due to start in **Chantry Road** on January 29 2016.

Residents' Parking

Residents of Leighton, Tudor and Farquhar Roads are being canvassed about the pros and cons of a residents' parking scheme.

Moseley in Bloom

Celebrated a successful year at its annual Awards Evening on November 3.



MiB's own awards were presented by BBC WM presenter and Arts Correspondent Satnam Rana. Hamid of Nima's Delicatessen was awarded the 'Star Shop'.

Moseley in Bloom won Gold in the Heart of England's campaign for the 8th time, was best in category for the 9th, and has been invited to go forward to the national Britain in Bloom awards. The Committee has yet to decide whether to enter this or any competition. They are committed to doing the work in the community that they have always done, including public floral displays, Open Gardens and their own awards, but without more volunteers and more financial input from local residents it would be difficult to make the preparations necessary to enter the competition. For information on volunteering for MiB and/or joining the Friends scheme, visit the website www.moseleyinbloom.org.uk

St Agnes Residents' Association

At midday on Sunday 18 October the residents of the St Agnes Conservation Area started to gather near the island behind the church. They were waiting for the inauguration of the renovated bench.



The most recent incarnation of the bench had been unceremoniously knocked over. Under the direction of the Chair of the Residents' Association, Peter Leadbetter, things started to happen. Amey, now in charge of road maintenance, was persuaded that the area round the bench needed to be paved, Mike Sheehan (with his wife Anne in the photo) set to work in his workshop. After about 250 hours he recreated the bench, incorporating parts of the old bench. The seat is dedicated to two men who lived and did much for the community, Jeremy Ballard and James McNicoll. It was thanks to generous donations from their widows Helen McNicoll and Kay Ballard (see photo), that the work on the bench and its planters was able to go ahead. After the ceremony,

the residents went into one of the local houses for a celebratory drink. A real community venture.

Since our last newsletter we have learnt of the deaths of two Moseley residents who will be remembered with affection by the Moseley Society. You may have read in the local press about the historian, academic and columnist, **Chris Upton** who died in October. As an historian specialising in the West Midlands, he was often consulted by the media, most recently on the BBC TV series *Peaky Blinders*. We invited him to share his considerable knowledge of the area with us at several Moseley Society meetings.



Chris Upton was the person invited to do the honours at the opening of the renovated Ice House in June 1999.

Lester Anderson also died in October. Members since 1999, we are most grateful to his partner Terry Lovell for donating £350 to the Moseley Society from the collection at Lester's funeral. As he was a keen gardener, we have decided to use this for the dovecote garden, including the purchase of new roses.

Litter, Waste, Compost and Trees

Helen Rehman, one of our Neighbourhood Wardens, has been working hard on a **Litter Strategy** (or rather an anti-litter strategy) for Moseley and Kings Heath. She and her colleague Oz (Philip Osman) have been at the local Farmers' Markets to explain their proposals, which they summarise as *Everybody's Problem, Everybody's Job*. They are also trying to raise funds for a defibrillator as well as for their salaries. Funding for the Wardens is likely to run out by the end of December.

Litter in the **Car Park** is still a problem, much of it left by street drinkers. The Moseley Society team continues its clean-ups, on the last Sunday in the month.



Our most recent collection - minus the squashed rat!

The fortnightly **garden waste** collection has now stopped until February next year. You can renew your subscription, which will remain at £35 for the year, with an Early Bird Discount of £5 during December. To renew go to:

www.birmingham.gov.uk/gardenwaste or phone 0121 303 1112, but lines may be busy during peak hours. Only debit/credit card payments can be taken.

We have been reminded that **home composting** is sometimes a better solution to garden waste than paying to have it collected by the Council and that a compost bin can be obtained for £18 at <http://www.birmingham.getcomposting.com/>

If you are not into composting of any sort, in **addition to garden waste**, you will also be able to put uncooked vegetables, spoilt fruit and used tea bags into the garden waste bins (or garden sacks).

Treecycling - For a donation, St Mary's Hospice is collecting old Christmas trees in Moseley on the weekend of January 9/10. For more details go to: www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/appeal/treecycling

Just a reminder of a warning in an email we sent out about a couple of chaps with a white van who were collecting paper waste before the arrival of the council vans. We suspect they were hoping to make some money by recycling the paper and cardboard rather than collecting sensitive information.

Highbury Heritage Trust

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, the posts of Chair and Vice-Chair for the proposed new Trust for the Highbury

Estate were being advertised. These have now been filled. Les Sparks is to be the first Chair with Paul Richards as his deputy. All the Trustees have also been appointed and have held their first meeting. In the New Year, they are proposing to hold a public gathering to outline their ideas and detail the considerable challenges that lie ahead.

Police News

We will continue to forward the email messages from the local police, which we hope you find useful.

The closures of many of Birmingham's police stations has been announced - among them Kings Heath and Sparkhill.

Farmers' Market

The pre-Christmas market will be on 19th December.

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome as members: Anne Gilbert, Tracey Stubbins & Steve Worrollo and Sylvia Butler-Willis.

Subscriptions

The new subscription year starts in January and we are grateful to the many members who have set up standing orders to pay £10, some with an additional donation, on that date. If your standing order is timed for a different date and it is easy for you to move it to January 2 that would be appreciated. For those who have not set up standing orders, you can still do so. The Moseley Society banks with Lloyds Bank. Sort code: 30-94-74 Account number 01127987. Otherwise, we will look forward to receiving your cheques or cash.

Our new Treasurer Phil Williams has been working to claim gift aid on recent subscriptions and informs us that there is new wording for the gift aid declaration which will apply in the next tax year. We will therefore be sending everyone for whom we do not have a Gift Aid declaration a membership renewal form in January, even if we know you pay by standing order. If you are a tax payer and wish to make a gift aid declaration we ask you to sign that part of the form.