



THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Caring for an historic area of Birmingham

Charity no. 512211

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Spring 2017 Newsletter



Life is certainly not dull in Moseley – signs of spring sprouting in front gardens one day, followed by Storm Doris the next. Since our last newsletter, Windermere Road has welcomed some stunning visitors from Siberia in search of food. Costa Coffee has opened in the village, Escape – the hair salon has closed and Prezzo has lost its appeal to retain the raised seating platform adjacent to the Alcester Road.

The development on the old Meteor Ford site is progressing at great speed. We have found no evidence to support the rumours that M&S are pulling out.

Moseley Society Meetings 7.30 at Moseley Exchange

The talks that remain on the calendar are:
Thursday March 16 – Behind the Back to Backs - Pat Franklin will talk about the project, the area, the inhabitants, their nationalities and the type of work available to the tenants and the effect visiting the houses has on visitors.

Thursday April 20 – Comic and novelty postcards of Birmingham - Mary Harding

Tuesday May 2 – Dissenters and the occasional murder. Birmingham 1660-1751 - Doug Smith

Thursday May 18 Annual General Meeting

The Committee will present the Annual Report and Accounts at the meeting. If you would like to nominate yourself or anyone else for the Committee, or find out more what is involved, please inform the Secretary.

We always welcome comments about our programme of talks. We usually have positive feedback from members who are able to attend. There is always a lot going on in Moseley and it is inevitable that our meetings clash with other events and some of you don't like going out at night, so we are considering offering some day time meetings in the next programme. Do let us know if this appeals to you.

Local History Group

The History Group recently received a generous donation of Britannic Assurance house magazines from Reg Monk who worked there for many years. The magazines, which date from 1930 to 1997, contain interesting articles about the history of Britannic Assurance and its development of a new head office on its Moor Green site and provide an illuminating insight into the life and times of the company and the people who worked for it.



Now flats, the building was originally the headquarters of Britannic Assurance plc from the mid-60s following their relocation from the city centre.

A summary can be found on the website at <http://moseley-society.org.uk/local-history/projects/the-britannic-assurance-magazines-collection/> together with an account of Reg Monk's memories of working there.

The Moseley Businesses and Ghost signs walk on the website (from the 2016 Moseley Festival) has been updated to include details of the newly revealed Shufflebotham's ghost sign in Woodbridge Road and the ghost signs for the Birmingham Municipal Bank above Select & Save in Alcester Road. The article has been written as a self-guided walk, which you can download and follow yourself. <http://moseley-society.org.uk/local-history/historical-walks-around-moseley/>

Work continues on the WW1 project and articles completed and added to the website about all 33 men from Moseley commemorated on the St Mary's War Memorial who were killed in action in 1916, in most cases at the Battle of the Somme.

Dovecote and Icehouse

Sadly, storm Doris hit one of the old apple trees in the meadow area of the dovecote garden. The loss of the tree includes the honeysuckle that was growing over it.



The dovecote garden team have worked steadily throughout the winter, when the weather let them. Everywhere looks tidy and full of promise: bulbs are popping up, frogspawn is bubbling in the pond and they look set to have a magnificent crop of rhubarb. Volunteer gardeners are always welcome to join the team. They meet on Sunday mornings on the first, third and fifth Sundays towards 11.00.

The first opening of the dovecote and icehouse will be on Saturday April 29.

Moseley Village Sapori de Sole – Flavours of the Sun



Benvenuti Antonello ed Efua a Moseley!

A warm welcome goes to the couple who have opened an Italian deli in St Mary's Row. The shop has strong ties to the Gargano Promontory on the Adriatic coast of Southern Italy, the homeland of Antonello Turco. The area has wonderful cheeses, organic oils, honey, cured meats and paposcia – all now available in Moseley. The shop, which has had several incarnations, including as a pet shop, is open from 9am – 6.30pm every day. Efua says they might eventually have a day off! At midday on offer are Paposcia filled with meats, cheeses and vegetables. To take away there are lasagnes and other Italian dishes. Antonello and Efua, who met in Italy, are familiar with the area as she was at University in Birmingham and they took over the Byzantium Restaurant in Kings Heath 4 years ago.

Zindaya – Ten years after the closure of Lukers bakery in Woodbridge Road, another exciting eatery has opened. This independently run restaurant is offering Moseley the flavours of Indian streets.

You may have noticed that **Escape** the hairdressers in St. Mary's Row closed its doors as the proprietor moved to London. However, according to the posters on the windows, a new salon should be opening shortly. There is a Letting Agency, Profectus, where the bike shop used to be, next to the flats under construction by the Prince of Wales.



Something strange has arrived in the Neighbourhood.

You may not have taken much notice, but a BT phone box has been on the pavement outside 93 Alcester Road for many years. It has now been converted into ATM cash machine and looks distinctly bizarre and out of place. At busy times it could be a real hazard and possible security risk. We have been in touch with the planners, the police and local councillors. The latest information we have is that planning permission should have been requested, would have been refused and so the Planning Department has started enforcement action to have the box removed – before someone comes along with a digger and scoops it up.

As we mentioned earlier, the planning appeal by Prezzo to retain the raised seating area has been dismissed. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the street scene and the Moseley Conservation area, a designated heritage asset.

Moseley in Bloom Springs into Action

The hanging baskets and planters for the Village floral display have been ordered, and they're expecting as vibrant a display of colour as last year. They have again decided to focus on the RHS's It's Your Neighbourhood Scheme.

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/communities/campaigns/it-s-your-neighbourhood/about> This is a way of encouraging the greening-up and cleaning-up of Moseley. Why not get together with your neighbours and enter this simple scheme? Contact Carol Miller doctorcarolmiller@gmail.com

Upcoming events include:

Plant stalls at the Farmers' Markets on 25 March, 29 April, 27 May where, apart

from plants, there will be beautiful notecards featuring photographs taken during last year's Open Gardens.



Open Gardens Weekend, 24-25 June:

This is your chance to see some of the hidden jewels of Moseley. Several people have already offered to open their gardens, but MiB are looking for more. It doesn't have to be perfect or in a finished state – if it makes you happy then it's probably worth showing off. They also need volunteers for the weekend itself for ticket sales, putting up balloons, selling tea or Pimms and making cakes. If you are willing to open your garden or volunteer, please contact Amy Ashton

amy1704@hotmail.co.uk

Nominations for Moseley Front Gardens Awards 1-30 June:

If any front garden catches your eye send the address of the garden to Jean Gilkison jean.gilkison@gmail.com during June.

News of Members

Roy Thomas 1924-2017

Roy was an Engineer and a Methodist Local Preacher, both equally important to him. He moved to Moseley in 1967 with his family and joined the Cambridge Road Methodist Church. He was also a very active member of the Moseley Society Local History Group. His legacy includes booklets on the listed buildings of Moseley and local personalities, one of whom was F.W. Lanchester. Roy found that many of the family papers were in Coventry and he spent a day a month for 25 years indexing them. He was also involved in organising the celebration of the centenary of the first Lanchester cars. Latterly he lived in

Highbury Court where he joined the music group and enjoyed the quiz evenings.



A photo of Roy Thomas when he was 90.

Edward Road Baptist Church

Congratulations to one of our members, Sheila Pennington who has been leading the project to refurbish the community rooms at Edward Road Baptist Church.

Birmingham Clarion Singers have been going since 1940 with a banner headline 'Singing for Peace and Justice'. One of our members, Doreen Baggett, is a long-time member of the group which will be hosting an evening at All Saints Centre, in Kings Heath on **Saturday, March 11 from 7.30** with special guests Pam Bishop and Graham Langley. Entry £5 (unwaged £4). Refreshments will be on sale.

Hustings for West Midlands Mayoral Elections

In May we will have the chance to vote for a West Midlands Mayor. Moseley Forum is holding a hustings, in conjunction with Kings Heath, Stirchley and Brandwood Forums, where you can hear what the candidates have to say. **Tuesday 25 April, 7.30 pm** at the Baptist Church in Kings Heath High Street, opposite ASDA.

Police Surgery – Costa Coffee, St Mary's Row, Moseley on **Thursday March 16 from 11 – 12am**. It's a chance to meet one of the local team informally.

Open Studios is a concept allowing artists to exhibit from their homes or work studios. It happens all over the world and will be coming to Moseley and Kings Heath in September. Artists and Art Lovers are invited to a planning Q&A meeting on **March 29 at 7 pm** at Moseley Exchange. <http://artsbrum.com/open-studios/>

Waxwings of Windermere Road.



Photo: Daniel Summers

The playing field car park has recently been the scene of a couple of unpleasant attacks and carjackings, so it was an absolute delight to witness the sight of 50 or so waxwings. They arrived about the second week of February and hung around for days to feed on the white rowan berries in the carpark. Most of the human observers were delighted, but the mistle thrushes were extremely annoyed at the arrival of the northern hoards who were plundering their larder! There are some wonderful photos on Twitter.

Subscriptions

We are in the process of collecting the subs for 2017. Thanks to those of you who have already paid. We are very grateful for any extra donations that have been added. To those members who have not yet got round to it, you will recently have received an email from Geoff Williams or a form will be delivered with this letter. If you have any membership queries please contact Geoff Williams, our Membership Secretary: gw99@hotmail.co.uk

New Members

We are delighted to welcome Jim Armour; Peter Streets; Margaret Brown; Julia Griffin and Peter & Roz Van den Hof as members of The Society.