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## THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Caring for an historic area of Birmingham

Charity no. 512211

### Spring 2018 Newsletter

We thought spring had sprung with the arrival of the snowdrops and crocuses in our parks and gardens, only to be blown sideways twice by Beasts from the East.



This mystery package arrived in St Agnes Road well before the snow. The Residents' Association have been told by Royal Mail it has to wait for up to 12 weeks to be unwrapped and recommissioned as a post box!

### Moseley Society meetings

Despite the weather our talks and events have gone ahead as planned. For the first time ever two teams scored top marks in the Quiz and so the prize was shared by The Mavericks and Moseley in Bloom's 'Budding Geniuses'. We had a good turnout for our afternoon talk on 'World War 1 – Tales of Love, Laughter and Loss' by Edwina Rees, Jim Hone and Ian Binnie on 1 February.

On 6 March Professor Mike Cullen told the story of the Barber Institute. The founder of the Institute, Lady Barber, stipulated that the collection should be made up of

'works of art of exceptional beauty and outstanding merit'. She also didn't want any works of art dated after 1900. This put the curators in a difficult position and eventually the trustees did manage to find a way round it, but it still means that any acquisitions have to be more than 30 years old at the time of purchase! This helps to explain why there are fewer major works of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as by the time the trustees had agreed to their purchase, they were much too expensive.

Looking ahead to future meetings -  
**Tuesday, 17 April** – "The story of English Coinage" by Phil Griffiths

**Thursday, 10 May** – "Moseley Bog through time" Michael Byrne

**Thursday 17 May** – 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 about what is involved, please contact the Secretary.

All meetings are held at the Moseley Exchange at 7.30 pm unless otherwise stated.

### Moseley Society History Group

Inside St Mary's Church you will find a memorial with names of men from the area who died in WW1. The Moseley Society History Group has been painstakingly researching and recording their histories. The results can found on the local history section of our website.

<http://moseley-society.org.uk/local-history/>

The records are in chronological order. There are some fascinating and tragic stories, including the death in 1917 of Lieutenant T Ewart Mitton who was the cousin of JRR Tolkien, who spent many happy times at his Aunt Mabel's house. Ewart served in the Royal Engineers Signals Section and was killed in a tragic railway accident in Belgium on Christmas

Eve 1917, aged twenty. There's much more about his family and the Tolkien connection on the website. Research continues with twenty-one names in 1918 and another one in 1919. The history group is also involved in the planning of a major exhibition commemorating the end of WW1 at Highbury Hall on 16 September as part of Heritage Open Days. This will be a collaborative venture with other groups and individuals who have been working on WW1 projects, including David Vaux and Paul Jaques who between them have a vast collection of documents and memorabilia relating to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. It promises to be an exciting exhibition with displays and activities to suit all ages.

## Moseley CDT



Moseley CDT is delighted to welcome a new Chief Officer Lorna Brewster. She is taking over in early April. Lorna was a Senior Portfolio Manager, across the UK, at the Big Lottery Fund focussing on organisational cultural change and staff development. Before this, Lorna led on the Women and Girls initiative and played a key role in the Big Lottery's Big Lunch, helping to bridge social and cultural divides. She is stepping into the role created by Tony Thapar, who founded and led the organisation for 17 years.

Lorna grew up in Moseley and lived just off the Wake Green Road with Moseley Bog at her back gate. Now, you probably won't find her building dens and getting muddy

in the Bog, but, more likely in a Moseley café or pub, volunteering at the community stand at the Farmers' Market, or wandering round Moseley Park. At home, she may be hammering away at creating, in her words, "vaguely wearable silver jewellery".

Like most of us, she feels Moseley is a unique place and is really excited about joining the CDT and building on its great work.

Fiona Adams, as a Trustee of the CDT, is excited about Lorna's decision to join the Trust:

"Lorna articulated a great vision for the Trust and I'm sure she will lead us to new areas of development as we grow the Trust's work in Moseley. She has a clear focus on change and will bring people along with her as we renew our efforts in community led development".

## The Village Goodbye and Hello

Last month we said farewell to **Aman** and **Rosie** who had been part of our community for nearly 15 years as the owners of **Village News**. Up at the crack of dawn to sort out the papers, they were always patient with impatient clients who hadn't had their paper in time for breakfast and always welcomed anyone who wandered in for a chat. We wish them the very best of luck in whatever they decide to do after a well-earned rest.



A newspaper cake made by Fiona Ritchie and decorated with sweets her children used to buy at the shop. She and Lawrence Moulin organised for a group to meet up at Village News before Aman and Rosie handed over the business.

We would like to welcome the new owners of Village News, **Gee** and **Meena**. They are a couple from Oldbury who fell in love with Moseley and decided to take over as our local newsagents. They are new to the business and admit to a few teething problems. Meena is not quite sure about the early starts, but Gee is used to them as in his previous job he was up at 1.30 am!

### **Starfish & Coffee**

Sadly, the shutters have come down on the café/restaurant in Woodbridge Road.

**Prezzo** has closed and work has begun on the new Loungers venture.

**Little Blackwood** is a new restaurant that is set to replace Cheval Blanc.

Campaigning sometimes does work - the plastic ATM machine outside One Stop Pony has been disconnected, ready for replacement with a more traditional looking red phone box.

### **Dovecote and Icehouse**

They will both be open to visitors on the afternoon of 31 March for the first time this year. You can visit the gardens at any time, but the Dovecote and the Icehouse will be open on the same Saturdays as the Farmers' Market between 1 and 4 pm throughout the summer.

### **Humphry Repton Bicentenary**



Humphry Repton was the landscape gardener who produced a 'Red Book' of ideas for John Taylor the owner of Moseley Hall in 1792. There is a national series of events to commemorate his death in 1818.

As part of this activity The Moseley Society has produced a poster exhibition which will be on display in the 'Cow House' throughout this summer whenever the Dovecote is open. The exhibition will also be shown at other venues during this bicentenary year.

### **Planning**



You may recognise this as the plot of land adjacent to 57 Billesley Lane within the St Agnes Conservation Area. It was created from part of the gardens of 127 and 129 Oxford Road and was the subject of a planning application in 2001, which was turned down on appeal. Recently there has been another application with a design more in keeping with the adjacent properties including a fence which would have given the impression that the corner plot had not been altered. However, we have learnt that this application has now been withdrawn. We will keep you informed of any further developments.

### **St Agnes Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan**

As we mentioned in the previous newsletter this document needs to be edited before it can be accepted by the Planning Department. Work is continuing and will be presented to a meeting in a few months' time.

### **Salisbury Road**

Is now open, which is a relief to bus users, but probably less so to the residents who must have enjoyed some peace and quiet over the past weeks.

### **Moseley Forum**

There was a good turnout at the AGM on 27 February. The formal business was dealt with in about 20 minutes and was



followed by a presentation on plans for *Moseley's Beating Heart*.

In January Moseley Forum was awarded £10,000 following a bid for Local Innovation Funding (LIF) from Birmingham City Council. Together with a grant of £4,000 from Moseley Farmers' Market, they are going to work with urban designers to develop a vision to make the Village a safer, less polluted and more welcoming place. Councillors have asked that they concentrate on St Mary's Row, the junction with Oxford Road and the likely increase in traffic when Moseley Station is reopened for passenger traffic.

The meeting was shown examples from Bexley Heath, Poynton in Cheshire and Walthamstow where traffic lights had been replaced by small roundabouts and *Copenhagen Crossings* which encourage cars to behave in more considerate ways.

Cat Watton, whom you may have seen on the BBC programme about Kings Heath High Street, *Fighting for Air*, shared her ideas on how simple changes made a big difference.

The Forum is organising a public meeting at **Queensbridge School on Wednesday 28 March at 7.30. David Jamieson, the Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands** will, hopefully, address our concerns about police resources and criminal activity across the ward. People wanting to attend need to book a ticket via [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/question-time-with-wm-police-crime-commissioner-david-jamieson-tickets-43862531011](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/question-time-with-wm-police-crime-commissioner-david-jamieson-tickets-43862531011)

## Shelter for the Homeless



©William Baldwin

This photo was taken at dawn when one of the volunteers had finished his overnight

shift at the shelter for the homeless at St Anne's Church. A joint venture by various churches in Birmingham, the 'roving' shelter takes place at a different church each night of the week. St Anne's in Moseley hosted the shelter on Saturday nights/Sunday mornings from 17/18 February to 24/25 March.

There are spaces for 12 guests, who have been referred through SIFA Fireside (supporting independence from alcohol). They meet in the city centre each evening, and either walk to the venue if it is central, or for places like St Anne's, they are brought in a minibus. The shelter is not a 'drop-in' shelter - people can't just walk in off the streets. This is important as it means the church can provide an environment that feels very safe and secure, both for the guests and the volunteers.

St Anne's and St Mary's are particularly grateful to the Farmers' Market for their financial support as well as to the many volunteers.

## Subscriptions

We are in the process of collecting the subs for 2018. Thanks to those of you who have already paid by standing order, cheque or cash. We are also very grateful for the extra donations that have been added. To those members who have not yet paid, 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](mailto:gw99@hotmail.co.uk)

If you would like to set up a standing order the Moseley Society bank details are  
Sort code: 30-94-74 Account: 01127987  
Please use your name and some of your address as your reference so we can identify you. The subscription is £10 pa (£5 for students/unwaged) and if possible could you make an immediate payment of the amount due and then set up the Standing Order for 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019.

## New Members

We are delighted to welcome Gregg Nicholson, Lorna Brewster, Ian Binnie and Adrian Randall & Sue Wainwright as members of The Society.