



THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Formed to protect a unique area of Birmingham

Charity No. 512211



LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

AUGUST 2012

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MOSELEY WINS SILVER AT THE OLYMPICS!

Moseley Wanderers represented Great Britain in the Summer 1900 Paris Olympics at rugby union. They played one game, losing 27–8 to France – but still winning the silver medal. How did this strange state of affairs come to pass?

Great Britain, France and Germany were the sole participants in the first ever rugby tournament at the Olympics. The first game, held on 14th October, was between France and Germany with France beating Germany 27–17.



The second game saw Moseley Wanderers take on France on the 28th October. France beat the British team 27–8. Wanderers were shut out in the first half, with France scoring 21 points. The second half saw a better performance from Wanderers and they outscored France in the second half, 8–6, but had no chance of catching up. Joseph Wallis scored a try while John Henry Birtles made a conversion and a penalty for Britain. Reichel scored his second try of the tournament, and Binoche added a try to bring France's victory to a 27–8 margin.

It is unclear how the team was chosen. Four of the players, including the captain, John Henry Birtles, played for Moseley, with a number of others also playing for Midlands based clubs. How the team came to be chosen to represent Moseley and Britain at the Olympics is not known. On the 28th October the *Birmingham Evening Gazette* reported: On Sunday an English fifteen will meet the French Rugby Union at the Paris Exhibition Grounds. A later report in *The Times* added more details: A rugby football match was played today at the Velodrome Municipal at Vincennes between Moseley Wanderers and a team representing the full strength of France. A crowd of 10,000 people was present. The French team held the advantage from the first and ultimately gained victory by 27 points to 8. The defeat of the Moseley team which was a strong one may be attributed partly to the fatigue of the journey. They only arrived in Paris this morning and have to leave again this evening. Neither reports mention the Olympics and it is unclear whether the players even realized they were competing in the Olympics. There is little doubt though that fatigue was probably a major contributor to the defeat. At least five of the players are believed to have played for their respective clubs, in England, the day before the game. Clement Deykin, for example, represented the Midland Counties on the 24th October, Moseley on 27th October, made the trip to Paris overnight, and then played for the Wanderers the next day.

The team in Paris was: Bayliss (Moseley), Birtles (Captain, Moseley), Cantion (London Irish), Darby (Cambridge University), Deykin (Moseley), Hood (Rosslyn Park), Logan (London Scottish), Loveitt (Coventry), Nicol (Old Edwardians), Smith (Old Edwardians), Talbot (Moseley), Wallis (Old Edwardians), Whittindale. C (Aston Old Edwardians), Whittindale. R (Aston Old Edwardians), Wilson (Old Crusaders)

Captain John Henry Birtles of Moseley was one of the star players for Moseley Wanderers. He died in 1935.

SEPTEMBER DIARY DATES

St. Mary's Church will be home to a History Group display from **Saturday 1st September to Tuesday 18th September**. This will tie in with the national annual **Heritage Open Days weekend on the 8th and 9th September** when the church and the Dovecote will be open to all.

The Community Games will be taking place on **Saturday 22nd September from 12 – 4**. The History Group will be having a stall and displays at this event and will be located somewhere near the ice-house. Anyone who would like to come along on the day and field questions, hand out leaflets etc. will be very welcome. Contact Chris, Christine or Janet for more information.

The History Group meeting is at **7:30 on Wednesday 26th September**. Our guest speaker is Patrick Baird who for many years was head of the Local Studies Department in Birmingham Central Library. Patrick is coming to talk about research sources and archives held in the library. Patrick will be revealing some of the lesser known sources and giving useful tips on how to make best use of what is available

TALES FROM OUR ARCHIVES

We have a regular team in on Mondays now helping to sort, file and catalogue the collection, For Sandy Macrae (right) there was an extraordinary sense of déjà vu as he sorted out some old papers and files. *"I have got bills here for a couple of houses in Oxford Road. The person that the bills are addressed to lives at Ascot Road, number 6, which is us. It is absolutely astounding, these are the bills to my own house! This just happens to be a*

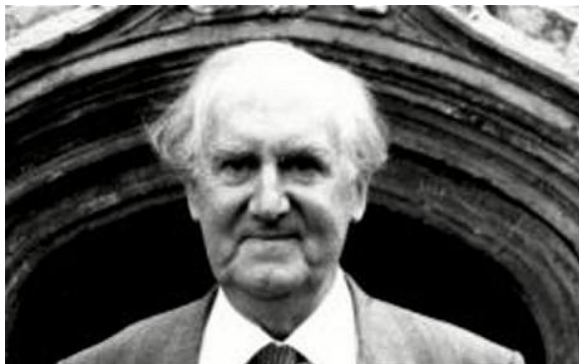


complete coincidence, they were just handed to me as some bills as being for Oxford Road but as it happens it starts off dealing with 6 Ascot Road. Although it looks as though the guy in 6 Ascot Road bought 110 Oxford Road. The things that were purchased (in the bills) were bought for Oxford Road because the guy was moving from Ascot Road to Oxford Road. But there are bills addressed to Ascot Road for two or three years so perhaps he continued to own both houses. I can check this because I should have the papers at home relating to that."

We can't promise such discoveries for everyone who comes but we welcome anyone who wants to drop in and see what we are up to and lend a hand if they so wish.



SIR ALAN COTTRELL



Sir Alan Howard Cottrell was a metallurgist and physicist. He was born on 17th July 1919 in Moseley. His family lived at 22 Westlands Road and he was educated at Moseley Grammar School. He received his BSc degree from Birmingham University in 1939 and a PhD for research on welding in 1942. In 1944 he married Jean Harber in Birmingham. He joined the staff of Birmingham University as a lecturer, and was made professor in 1949.

From 1958 to 1965 Cottrell was Professor of Metallurgy at Cambridge University. He also worked for the government in various capacities, most notably as Chief Scientific Adviser from 1971 to 1974. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1955 and was knighted in 1971. Cottrell died on 15th February 2012 after a brief illness.