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THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Caring for an historic area of Birmingham

Charity no. 512211

Spring 2015 Newsletter



The lighter evenings and the arrival of the rhubarb in the Dovecote kitchen garden are a welcome sign of Spring. Have you heard the good news from Moseley in Bloom? It is back in the business of going for gold and once again wants us to open our gardens in June. More of that later

Traffic Lights in the Village

If you have been receiving Fiona Adams' emails, you will have an idea of the on-going saga of the lights. A few weeks ago the pedestrian island in St. Mary's Row was very badly damaged by a vehicle. The repairs seemed endless and it was then discovered that, without consultation with local Councillors, businesses or residents, the contractors had decided to bring forward planned renewals of all lights and cables at the junction.

Co-incidentally Moseley and Kings Heath Ward is a pilot area for the Cycle Revolution and also the 20 mph speed limit areas, which will also require changes at the lights. We are assured that the pedestrian refuges on Alcester Road will be installed according to the Cycle Revolution plans.

We still don't know how long all this will take. Meanwhile if you have an email address but have not told us – please do so we can include you in updates.

Moseley Society Meetings

Since our last newsletter, we have had tea and conversation with Emeritus Professor Peter Willmore; a well-attended quiz with Spurgeon's Tabernacle as the new champions and a talk on St. Dunstan's Parish in Kings Heath by Dr. Bob Wilcher.

Thursday 19 March, 7.30 - Michael Wolfe, Chair of Moseley Park and Pool Trust "Epping Forest, Moseley Park and Hackney Marshes - their connected threads".

Tuesday 14 April - Andrew Reeks will be giving a talk on **Birmingham, Joseph Chamberlain and the 1906 Election.**

Thursday 16 April - a change from the published talk - **Dr Terry Slater 'The Cathedral Church of St Philip's, 1715 - 2015'.**

Thursday 21 May - 7.30 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 inform the Secretary.

The formal business will be followed by a talk by **Chief Superintendent Murray, West Midlands Police** who commands a large swathe of East Birmingham, with our Ward being one of the extremities.

Local History group

Since the winter newsletter, there has been a talk on Pollution in the Black Country in the 19th Century and a talk as part of the Society's programme by Bob Wilcher on the History of St Dunstan's Parish in Kings Heath.

There have been two guided visits to the Birmingham Gun Barrel Proof House. Still a

working Proof House, the visits took place with 'noises off' as the testing proceeded as it has done continually since 1813.

Work is continuing on the World War 1 project, with a current focus on conscientious objectors, research into those named on the St Mary's war memorial, an article on Percy Jeeves the cricketer and documents from Graham Underhill including postcards and sketches from the Front.

They have nearly completed work on migrating the existing Local History Website on to a new location where it will be fully integrated with the main Society website.

Planning

When you read the paragraph below you will realise that Jean Gilkison, who since 2011 has been leading our response to planning applications, has a new and time-consuming calling. Meanwhile the Moseley Regeneration Group has also been monitoring planning applications, so we plan to pool our resources and work together on these issues in future.

Moseley in Bloom



After a cry for help last year, Moseley in Bloom now has new Co-Chairs. Jean Gilkison, originally from the United States, has lived in the UK for over 35 years, most of them in Moseley. Since retiring from her academic job, she has been active in Moseley affairs, particularly through the Moseley Society. Trevor Hocking has recently joined Jean in Moseley from his previous home in Shropshire. A retired plant biologist with a background in both academia and business, his experience will be invaluable in getting Moseley in Bloom up and running again.

'We are both so excited to be involved in MiB. Moseley is such a special place, and the thought that it might not show itself to its best advantage during the summer was heartbreaking. We're determined to do all we can to make sure that doesn't happen'.

One of the first steps has been to reverse the earlier decision not to enter the Heart of England in Bloom campaign, and MiB is pleased to announce that Moseley will now be going for gold for the ninth year.

There are still challenges ahead. Moseley in Bloom has lost all its public funding and will shortly be launching a new Friends' scheme and a Business Supporters' scheme to help plug the gap and to encourage people to get involved.

'We now need people to donate their time and to join our Friends' scheme so we can put Moseley in Bloom on a firm and sustainable footing for the future'. Please get in touch via info@moseleyinbloom.org, or contact Jean and Trevor on 0121 449-3722. And watch the website for details of the Friends' scheme:

<http://moseleyinbloom.org.uk/>

Open Gardens 2015

The MiB Open Gardens Weekend will run on 27/28 June and the organisers are urgently seeking gardens. They are not looking for show gardens, but rather for people willing to let the Moseley community see how they have adapted their garden spaces according to their needs and aesthetics. Gardens that are 'works in progress' are also welcome! On Saturday, 27 June, we need gardens in Moseley Central and West area, that is, Chantry Road, Park Hill, Reddings, Moorcroft, Salisbury and Amesbury Roads and others near to Moseley village. On Sunday, 28 June, it's the turn of Moseley East side, School, Prospect, Blenheim, Cambridge, Woodfield and Clarence Roads, together with Billesley Lane, Dyott Road, St Agnes Road and Yardley Wood Road and the surrounding area. This is a delightful community event that gives everyone a chance to appreciate some of the hidden gems of Moseley. It also raises money to keep Moseley clean and green. If

you are interested in opening your garden and would like further details please email info@moseleyinbloom.org.uk or ring Carol Miller on 449 4550.

Buses - response to our petitions

We had two detailed replies from Centro, neither of which offered much hope. The decision to move the No 1 terminus for off-peak services from Paradise Circus to Sheepcote Street was taken because there were often delays at that end of the journey. It seems that by shortening the route at the town end the service is more reliable. The route has been extended beyond Acocks Green – although that is of no help to people trying to reach the far side of the city centre.

The plea for a service to the QE and University has been analysed with various possibilities considered. However in the end it was decided for the moment that it would not be cost effective.

Moseley Village



Is this their way of saying goodbye or are we going to get a more formal notice of **HSBC's** departure from Moseley? Very disappointingly the bank is closing its branch in the village in May.

The shutters are also down on a couple more shop fronts in St. Mary's Row. **Tapered Edge** moved out to set up in Edgbaston and **Reuben Colley** - the art gallery - is now in Colmore Row. Maybe they have found homes that suit them better, but it is a shame for Moseley to lose two of the few business that don't serve coffee and snacks. Indigo Wholefoods is moving into the space left by the gallery and work is underway for a new business to open next door. We are happy to say that **Maison Mayci** has only planned to remove their double doors temporarily.



They are going for refurbishment and should be back in situ by the end of May. There will be stronger, additional hinges to allow easier opening so they will form the main entrance allowing buggies easier access.

Despite general opposition to such an unspecific application, in 2013 planning permission was granted to the owners of the **Halfords** garage building for 'Change of use from a motor vehicle repair and servicing centre (B2) to shop use (A1), or professional and financial use (A2), or restaurant, snack bar and cafe use (A3) or business use (B1a)'. The building has now been let to the Bristol **Boston Tea Party** chain - described on its website as a *Funky cafe chain serving up breakfast, burgers, salads and baked goods with sustainable ingredients.*

Dovecote and icehouse

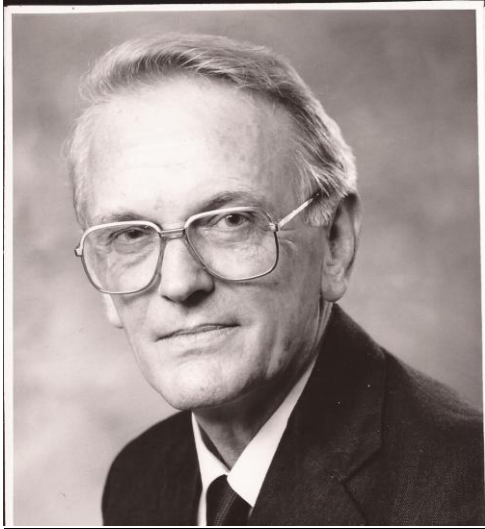


Signs of Spring at the dovecote garden. The plants are waking up again after the winter, so there is much to be done before our first opening on March 28th. If you would like to help at the dovecote in the

garden or as a steward when we are open to the public, please do get in touch.

The opening days for both the dovecote and icehouse in 2015 will be: March 28, April 25, May 30, June 27, July 25, August 29 and September 26.

In Memory



In our last newsletter, we paid tribute to John Simmonite, a founder of Moseley and District Churches Association. We have since heard that he very generously left the Moseley Society £1,000 in his will.

We will let you know our thoughts and consult you before we make a final decision on how to best use this gift.

Jeremy Ballard It is with great sadness that we learnt of Jeremy's death from cancer a few weeks ago. Although we could never persuade him to join the Moseley Society he was one of the great personalities of Moseley. He was only 76, a former leading violinist with the CBSO, a truly talented musician and artist, and an enthusiastic supporter of many local (particularly musical) affairs and charities. His regular concerts at Kumar and Bridie's home, in aid of cystic fibrosis, was one cause close to his heart.

Another great servant of Moseley, **James McNicoll**, also died recently. He will be remembered among other things for his work for St Agnes Residents' Association – for example the spring bulbs and other plants on communal areas were planted by James. John Williams recalls James as being 'an extraordinarily efficient financial

controller for Birmingham 13 magazine' and Fiona Adams will always be grateful for the help he gave her in reorganising her planning records.

Jericho Foundation

Just over the border in Balsall Heath, there is a charity running social enterprises which help support local disadvantaged individuals break down barriers to become fulfilled, skilled and employed. We came across Jericho when BANF Print closed and we needed somewhere to print our newsletter. We have used them ever since and they also print material for the Local History Group.

Printing is not the only enterprise they are involved in. They do catering, construction, landscaping, cleaning, recycling, and run a couple of ReUser stores. Recently, they opened the Loft Workspace which is a floor subdivided by brightly coloured partitions offering the opportunity for people who are starting their own business to work in a shared space. There will be help and advice on hand as well as networking with others starting-up their own business.

More information at: <http://jericho.org.uk/>

A similar system is operating at the Moseley Exchange and Jericho hopes that the two organisations will be working together to support people hoping to run their own business. Plenty more on offer at the Exchange. More information at: <http://moseleyexchange.com/>

New Members We are pleased to welcome Jan & Roger Woods, John Wiltshire, Fiona Tyson, Anna Parker, Jack & Marion Wilson and David Papadopoulos.

Subscription Renewal

We are grateful to the many members who have set up Standing Orders. If, according to our records, your subscription is now due you will soon be receiving a renewal form by email from Geoff Williams. If you do not use email, a form will be delivered with this letter. We are grateful to Geoff Williams for taking on the full role of Membership Secretary. In future you will see his King Edward Road address on the new form. However if it's more convenient to drop envelopes at 36 Grove Avenue please continue to do so.