



Annual Review 2019-20

THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Caring for an historic area of Birmingham

Charity no. 512211

Co-Chairs' Report

Helen Minovi and Geoff Rees

At last year's May AGM we celebrated 40 years of the Society's many and varied contributions to the civic life of Moseley and looked forward to the next 40 busy years of being involved in all of the aspects of community activity that occupy members on a regular basis. All of this started very well.



The reports from the sub-groups reveal the on-going work of The Society. Challenges on the horizon include controversial proposals for 'Breaking the No 50 bus free from congestion', the access to the proposed new station and developments affecting the rail link into central Birmingham. We have been glad to welcome Amy Maclean as Chair of Moseley in Bloom at our committee meetings to keep the link between the two organisations.

The Covid-19 pandemic has altered all our plans for the year ahead. This Review would normally have been printed and circulated in advance of the AGM, but that has been cancelled and members who do not use email will receive photocopies.

All current committee members are willing to stay in post, but interest from new (and especially younger) members would be welcome. Many of our members and the Committee are of an age to be classed as 'at risk' and required to remain behind closed front doors. The public openings of the dovecote and icehouse are on hold; Moseley in Bloom Open Gardens and Moseley Festival both cancelled and Heritage Open Days in doubt. We look forward to a very different year ahead but are heartened by the community spirit shown by 'Moseley Together'. Facilitated by Moseley Community Development Trust, it has been the email network of Moseley Society members and

the many active residents' social media groups that enabled this to spring into action and recruit so many volunteers at an early stage of the lockdown. It is our members who are supplying the information and tips about how to survive in unprecedented circumstances that Fiona Adams, Sally Wright and Ray Tier have been able to circulate as 'Local News'. This effort has already seen the recruitment of new members and we hope more will follow their example and that we will emerge with a stronger community.

Secretary's Report

Fiona Adams

Paper, email and our website remain the only ways we communicate with our members as we find that the more inter-active social media options are too time-consuming to contemplate. It has nevertheless been another busy year. Expected events such as Moseley Festival Street Fair and Heritage Open Days provided an opportunity to tell the wider world what we do.



There have been unexpected events where our email network proved useful. Other methods of newspaper delivery were quickly shared after the sudden closure of Village News.

In January the committee decided to join Civic Voice, the national charity that was set up 10 years ago after Civic Trust had folded. Its aim is to "make places more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive and to promote civic pride". We had hesitated until now because, as one of the larger societies, we will pay the full fee of £500 p.a. However we decided the time had come to co-operate with and learn from other societies in the light of ever-increased relaxation of permitted development planning rights and Birmingham's decision to redact the names of applicants for planning permission. We are

grateful to Jack Wilson for agreeing to keep a watching eye on the messages from Civic Voice. As members of Birmingham Heritage Forum we are helped to advertise the public openings of the dovecote and icehouse, and also to learn from some of the larger venues in the city. During the year Helen Minovi and I have been to meetings at Aston Parish Church, The Hive and Selly Manor, all interesting and worthwhile.

Treasurer's Report Phil Williams

The report and accounts to 31 December 2019 were approved and signed by the Trustees on 9 March and the Annual Return to the Charity Commission completed. The accounts are available on the website and can be sent on request to any member by email or post.

Income and expenditure

Income for the year is similar to previous years but with income from subscriptions slightly up on 2018. The Gift Aid claim for the year continues to be boosted by our ability to now claim Gift Aid on small cash donations. Expenditure on meetings, events, management, and administration is in line with expenditure in previous years. Items specific to this year are the expenditures on a new membership form, its distribution to potential members, promoting awareness of the Society's 40th year of existence and a celebration of that at the AGM.

The net result of our activities is a small deficit of income and expenditure of £230 for the year. In 2018 there was a surplus of £1,277.

Balance sheet

Mainly as a result of the small deficit, total funds have decreased from £12,153 to £11,635 with a similar decrease in bank balances from £10,123 to £9,614.

Marketing, News and Membership

Fiona Adams, Mike Marlow, Helen Minovi, Geoff Rees, John Rouse, Ray Tier, Geoff Williams, Sally Wright

This group led the planning of celebrations of the Society's achievements over 40 years.



We started with the AGM where members joined the Committee in reminiscing and enjoying a celebratory glass in one hand and food from Maison Mayci in the other.



The roll-up banner made its appearance at the Moseley Festival and the Chronological posters, which had been brought up to date by Fiona Adams and Roy Cockel, were exhibited in various places throughout the year.

Before the uncertainty caused by the lockdown we had made the decision not to continue to print a programme card as we felt there are other ways of informing members of forthcoming events. For similar reasons, the Spring Newsletter was abandoned and replaced by the 'Local News' described by the Co-Chairs.

Dovecote & Icehouse

Helen Minovi, Roy Cockel, Andrew Devey, Paul Lindley and Gill McGillivray

The iconic 18th century **dovecote** buildings represent a link with Moseley's past and continue to feature in the current life of the village. We opened to the public every month from Easter to the Autumn, took part in Open Gardens - a tremendous success on the hottest day of the year - and Heritage Open Day. The garden offers a welcome haven of tranquility to visitors, especially the staff and patients from Moseley Hall Hospital. The effort and dedication of the dovecote gardeners was recognised by an Outstanding award in the RHS "It's Your Neighbourhood" scheme. The regular team is small, but some additional helpers joined to prepare for the RHS assessors' visit.



It would be wonderful to have more regular gardeners. We have been following good gardening practices. We collect rainwater, our compost heaps have been reinvigorated; we encourage wildlife and have planted wildflowers in the meadow. Our small kitchen garden has produced a good harvest of rhubarb and soft fruit. Looking forward, we plan to plant a 40th anniversary tree.

During the year the cow house, the home of Clarence the calf, displayed our 40th Anniversary posters and photos. We are very grateful for the support of all our visitors and our loyal team of stewards and gardeners. Our thanks must also go to Paul Lindley, for maintaining the buildings, which are showing signs of age.

The **icehouse** continues to wow visitors during monthly open days and on special occasions during festivals or for guided walks. We remain very grateful to Kate Booth for leading the group of volunteers who open and share with visitors the story of how it was restored and its past use by the family at Moseley Hall.



Following erosion of the banks around the entrance to the icehouse during the Jazz Festival, a temporary wooden fence was erected around the site and as a result the banks were well protected during the Folk Festival. At some point, the temporary fence will be replaced by permanent railings, the cost to be shared between the Society and Park & Pool Trust.

Programme

Helen Minovi, Robert Orme, Ray Tier, John Underwood.

We almost managed to complete our 2019/2020 programme. The last scheduled talk would have been on April 28th: Pat Franklin's talk on Birmingham Suffragettes has been postponed and the AGM cancelled. We did achieve a busy, interesting series of events including seven talks, two of which were held in the afternoon, an evening of festive music in December at St.



Mary's Church, and a fiendishly difficult quiz. History topics and those with local connections seemed most popular. Moseley in Bloom arranged two of the talks – about the Thrive gardeners in

Kings Heath and the sensational Miss Macaroon. Stephen Alabaster's talk in January about the family's jewellery business attracted a sensationally large audience, prompting us to review our health and safety procedures. With the help of the team at the Exchange, we have tightened up systems. We would also like to thank all our speakers and helpers and our appreciative audiences. Our meetings are also opportunities to meet and mingle with other members and to encourage more people to join the Society.

Planning & Licensing

Fiona Adams, John Dring, Bob Edmonds, Carolyn Hicks, Izzy Knowles, Gill McGillivray, Carole McKeown, Robert Orme, David Sandison & Stephen Sandys.

Our group, which includes representatives from Residents' Associations, continues to meet regularly to monitor applications and this year we considered 215, over half of which were for domestic extensions or alterations. We sent in 120 responses – the majority concerning commercial premises. We also responded to four appeals to the Planning Inspectorate. The striking new feature this year has been the number of applications we have seen for HMOs – houses in multiple occupation. There have been 15 applications for either HMOs or subdivision of flats into smaller units. Although HMOs have been a major feature in some other parts of the city for many years, their arrival in Moseley is, we feel, a sign of the crisis in housing provision. Many of the plans we see show tiny rooms and totally inadequate communal space. Another increasing feature has been applications for private children's homes. 4 properties in Moseley featured in the planning lists this year.

Work is underway on some of the controversial applications described in previous Reviews - the new carpark at Moseley Hall Hospital; flats at 50 School Road and on what some of us still think of as 'Palm Court Hotel' at Wake Green Road /Mayfield Road. The plans for the new railway station in Kings Heath have been approved and the application for Moseley Village Station (as we hope it will be called) is expected soon.

We all await with trepidation to discover what effect the closures of businesses during the lockdown will have when the restrictions ease. We hope the 8 barbers and hairdressers will reopen quickly! During the year permission was refused for a change of use to A3 café/restaurant at the former Coral bookmaker and the applicant may be breathing a sigh of relief. Permission to convert the former HSBC premises into a bar/small hotel was renewed but we are not holding our breath until work starts. Unfortunately, installation of new shopfronts

without permission or consideration of the Moseley Shopfront Design Guide continues to downgrade the appearance of Moseley Conservation Area.

The St Agnes Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan is still in draft and awaiting formal consultation by the Planning Department, now delayed by the pandemic.

Towards the end of the year David Sandison retired from his role of keeper of the list of applications. We have been very grateful to him for his work to keep us updated with the seemingly endless stream of applications and also to Gill McGillivray for taking over that vital role for the Society and the Moseley Regeneration Group. David's knowledge and eye for detail is missed by us all.

Moseley History Group Report

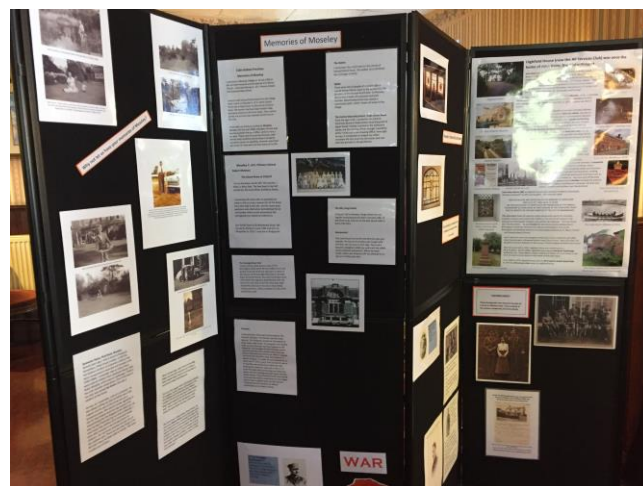
Ray Tier, Janet Berry, Ian Binnie, Roy Cockel, Frank Gresham, Jim Hone, Edwina Rees

Until the lockdown, the enthusiastic members of the History Group continued to meet each Thursday morning to research aspects of local history in response to requests from members and other enquiries, on one occasion from as far afield as Australia. The group's collection of B13 magazines has been catalogued by Peter Streets and items based on our research are now being contributed to B13 Magazine each month.



As part of Heritage Open Days, the Group opened its doors at the All Services Club for visitors to see the results of its research, browse through its collection and view displays of the history of the Moseley Society on its 40th anniversary.

Work is drawing to a close on the project to document the stories of local men killed in World



War I. In October, in collaboration with the Gallipoli Association, the Western Front Association and local regiments, a service was organised at St Mary's followed by a talk, exhibition and a booklet commemorating local men killed in the ill-fated Gallipoli Campaign.

The latest project is to record examples of the magnificent domestic stained-glass windows in Moseley, to be published through the website.

As part of our efforts to develop interest in Moseley's history a group has been set up in Lench's Close. It has met regularly, held talks, enjoyed a guided history walk around the village and contributed articles for the website on Sorrento Hospital. In addition, items from our Frank Jones collection were lent to Park Hill School to support their project on World War II. A visit and tour of St Chad's Cathedral was organised to present the Dean with a picture of the Cathedral which had kindly been donated by the family of former members Mr & Mrs Holloway. Guided walks also featured throughout the year and a series of local walks are being planned which will include local history gleaned from the collection held by the group.

Committee in 2019-20

Helen Minovi & Geoff Rees, Co-chairs

Phil Williams, Treasurer

Fiona Adams, Secretary

Roy Cockel (Co-opted)

Jean Gilkison (Co-opted)

Robert Orme

John Underwood

John Dring

Paul Lindley

Ray Tier

Sally Wright

The Moseley Society Registered charity 512211

The Society can be contacted via the Secretary at 36 Grove Avenue, Moseley, B13 9RY. Subscriptions and letters may be handed in at Moseley Travel, 172 Alcester Road, near the public car park entrance in Moseley, while information about the Society is available next door at Domestica, or across the road at Moseley Exchange.