



THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Caring for an historic area of Birmingham

Charity no. 512211

36 Grove Avenue, Moseley
Birmingham, B13 9RY
0121-449 2133

e-mail: all-enquiries@moseley-society.org.uk
website: <http://www.moseley-society.org.uk/>

Winter Newsletter 2023

We hope the new year has started well for you and we look forward to getting together once again at one of our meetings planned over the next few months.



This scene of the boardwalk in Moseley Bog was captured on a bright January day. However, is the area deep in the centre of this historic wet woodland really a bog or a fen? All will be revealed.

Talks and Meetings

Over the last couple of years we have only managed to organise a few Zoom talks, although we did have a successful face to face AGM in May. We are very keen to revive our regular meetings and are pleased to tell you that on **14 February (Valentine's Day) at 2.30 pm** we are inviting you to join us for tea and cakes to talk about your love of Moseley and share your stories about living here as well as considering the future of the Society and how to attract new members.

21 March at 2pm There will be a talk by Ian Binnie, Peter Streets and David Vaux entitled "**Bomb Alley: The World War Two Blitz and Home Front in Moseley, Balsall Heath and Kings Heath**" In addition to the talk by the researchers, there will also be a display, produced by Matt Felkin, of many unique photographs and documents about the Blitz in Birmingham.

The talk will be repeated on Zoom at 7.30 in the evening.

Wednesday 19 April at 7.30 pm We are hoping that Matthew Vaughan will talk to us about 'Moseley Road Baths and Library'. Matthew is an architect with Donald Insall Associates.

The AGM is planned for **Tuesday 9 May at 7.30 pm**. All the meetings will be at the Moseley Exchange.

Dovecote and Icehouse

A motivating fact for the team at the dovecote is knowing that staff, patients and visitors at Moseley Hall Hospital can enjoy the tranquil, therapeutic surroundings of the garden. Research shows that gardening has a positive effect on our bodies as well as our minds. Thirty minutes gardening is reckoned to be the equivalent to playing badminton, volleyball or doing yoga!

The gardeners are looking forward to a busy year in the dovecote garden, with all the benefits that that can bring. Why not join them? They're usually to be found there on Sunday mornings from 11.00.

Last year in November, Class 4 of SS John & Monica visited the Dovecote.



Helen Minovi showing the young visitors a spectacular collection of rosehips in the garden. The class had prepared for their visit at school, but had plenty more to learn about the Dovecote, the garden, the Cow House and Moseley Hall. To judge by their thank-you letters, they had a great time.

The Icehouse briefly emerged from hibernation on 7 January to receive a large group of City of Birmingham Ramblers. Both the Dovecote and Icehouse will be open to visitors again in the afternoons of the Farmers' Markets, which are on the last Saturdays of the month starting on 25 March. There will be other occasions such as Moseley in Bloom Open Gardens and Birmingham Heritage Week.

Moseley Society History Group

The History Group is currently meeting at the Sorrento Lounge in Alcester Road at 10.30 on the final Thursday of the month. Visitors are always welcome, but please contact them to find out more about the group's activities at moseleyhistory@gmail.com. There are many opportunities for further interesting research and new volunteers are always welcome.

The History Group also produce articles for the monthly Moseley B13 (+BH12&KH14) magazine. Recently, the subject was Constance Spry. As a child, she lived in Woodstock Road, Moseley and went to school at King Edward VI High School for girls before moving to Ireland with her family. Those of us of a certain generation will associate her name with cookery and exotic flower arrangements. At the time she was quite revolutionary and trendsetting, using unusual additions such as chard, and even weeds in her creations.

And let's not forget that it was Constance Spry who invented the recipe for Coronation Chicken, versions of which will almost certainly be appearing in May this year!

Moseley Shopping centre

Lewis's in Moseley has been closed since the fire that started in the attic above the café and spread through the building in November.

We have been told that the evening trade in Moseley has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels with businesses relying on the take-away trade.

In spite of this, Boots has become Boo Burgers. This will add yet another eatery to the line of shops between Salisbury Road and St Columba Church.

On the opposite side of the road, we now have Cabbage White, not a restaurant or takeaway, but a dry cleaner.

Moseley Hive

The 'meanwhile use' of Moseley Hive as a community centre continues. On Saturday 28 January local residents had the opportunity to look at the new train station designs for Moseley Village and to discuss the future of the centre of the Village with the Moseley Community Development Trust (CDT).

To get more news of what's happening in the Hive and other local events sign up to Moseley Together: <https://moseleytogether.org.uk/>

Re-opening of Moseley Station



Believe it or not, there are a few residents who haven't heard that there is to be a station in Moseley! It is difficult to miss now with the blue board and bold signs from VolkerFitzpatrick, the construction firm working with West Midlands Rail Executive and other partners. At a recent meeting of the Moseley Forum, representatives from both of these gave an update and answered questions. The stations for Moseley Village, Kings Heath and Pineapple Road are due to open simultaneously by the end of the year, but that will be followed by 2-3 months of safety checks. Some planning issues are still to be resolved including decisions on materials to be used, lighting, the addition of a cycle lane leading up to the station and how traffic will be affected when the mini roundabout at the junction of Oxford Road is constructed. The whole process is complex as this is a joint venture with five partners and the added complication of the 'unknowns', that are revealed by the excavations along the embankments. There will be a chance for local residents to join the Adopt a Station scheme where volunteers can decide on additions to the forecourt, such as artworks or gardens.

A meeting to update the progress of the project will be arranged by the Moseley Forum in about 3 months. See:

<https://wmre.org.uk/camp-hill-line-stations/>

Beryl Bike Hire Scheme



Moseley Society Committee member, Kirsty de Vos is a keen supporter of cycling as a mode of transport, so we asked her to go for a test ride on these new arrivals and outline how the scheme works. Like much in modern life, you will need a smart phone to register on the Beryl Bike App. The scheme is clearly explained via the App and website <http://beryl.cc> She reported that you pay in advance and must be over 16. The bikes can be returned to any docking station – there are 6 locations around Moseley. The primary one is at the junction of Alcester and Salisbury Road. The others are 'virtual' and each bike has a yellow lock to push down to terminate the ride. Before setting off it's a good idea to check the availability of bikes.

Kirsty reports that they are easy to ride, even for beginners with wide tyres and comfortable adjustable seating position. They are quite heavy, so can be a bit of challenge riding up hills, but electric bikes are available. Let's hope they catch on and the scheme extends as we could do with fewer cars on our roads and cleaner air in our neighbourhood!

Moseley and Kings Heath low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs)

We are sure that the news will have reached those concerned that People and Places Phase 2 was approved and was set to be made permanent. But since then, the decision has been called in for scrutiny. The Scrutiny Committee will be meeting on 8 February. The Moseley Society made the decision not to comment on these plans on behalf of our members but to leave individuals to work with their local groups as the proposals affected people in many different ways.

Moseley Bog



It was an article in a recent edition of the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust magazine that led us to have a closer look what was the main storage pool for Sarehole Mill. It turns out that what most of us have been calling a bog is in fact a fen. To put it simply, bogs are usually found in upland wet areas where there is a lot of rainfall, whereas a fen is fed by underground springs and streams, which is the case in our 'bog'. As you will see from the photo, the area looks quite different to its surroundings. To preserve this rare habitat, volunteers have cleared the site of alder and willow which dry it out and attract other trees and plants which would take over. Hopefully, now the wood horsetail, gypsywort, skullcap, angelica and meadowsweet will thrive and support other wildlife. Some reeds and scrub have been left at the edge of the fen for nesting birds. As the year progresses, there is so much to see. Keep an eye out for the native bluebells in the wooded area. In a couple of the surrounding meadows 'hay strewing' has been used to increase the diversity of flora.



The success of scattering hay complete with seeds from an area rich in plants to one less so, has meant that we now have orchids as well as cowslips in corners of what will certainly remain known as Moseley Bog and Joy's Wood!

To find out how to volunteer at this very special nature reserve on our door-step visit <https://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/volunteer>

John Rouse



On 26 September last year, there was a large gathering at Highbury Hall to celebrate the life of John Rouse who had sadly died in August. A long time Moseley resident he retired from what is now Birmingham City University in 2008 and became an enthusiastic and valuable volunteer in several local charities including the Moseley Society. His most long-lasting contribution to the Society was the re-writing of the constitution. John was enthusiastic about gardens and we are particularly grateful to him for his involvement in the creation of the 18th Century style garden at the Dovecote. He helped in the research of relevant plants and in the physical work on the new garden. We are talking of ways to make sure John's contribution is recognised and remembered. We will remember him as sharp, open, friendly and good humoured and send our best wishes to his wife Janis, their children George and Edie, and granddaughter Ella, who was born in time to meet her grandfather.

John Rouse will also be remembered by the Eve Brook Scholarship Fund in a new award named after him. The fund was set up by Eve Brook, a local Councillor, when she was faced with terminal cancer 25 years ago. John took over as Treasurer of the fund in

2009 and raised and spent well over a quarter of a million pounds to help 121 care-leavers to go to university. The award named after him will help and fund former beneficiaries in their future careers, particularly in the arts where employment and finance are so precarious. To find out more about the EBSF and the past and present beneficiaries refer to the website.

<https://www.evebrookfund.org.uk/john-rouse/>

Moseley Litterbusters

The group was set up in 2017 after it was realised that Moseley Village was not receiving any street cleaning from the Council over the weekend, which left it in a sorry state following Friday and Saturday nightlife. Over 40 volunteers, including 3 students doing the Duke of Edinburgh award, actively work in groups or individually in streets they have adopted. They mainly focus on Moseley but do venture into surrounding areas and there is a sister group in the Moor Green and Highbury Park area. The Litterbusters collected 2,791 bags in 2022, that's 17 tonnes of litter! 660 very large Nitrous Oxide canisters (smart whips) were also collected from the streets. They report fly tipping and unblock street drains clogged with leaves and litter. They liaise with the Council to report hot spots and request street cleans and work with 3 local schools. This amazingly active group of people do need more volunteers. Equipment, sacks and health and safety support are provided. To find out more email:

moseleylitterbusters@gmail.com

Membership Renewal

Thank you to the many members who have Standing Orders set up to pay subscriptions. A renewal form is attached for those of you who prefer to pay in some other way. There are details on the website about how to set up a Standing Order – please contact us if you would like them sent to you direct.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome Jo Franklin; Paul Mackney with Cherry & Ruby Sewell and Andrew Chester as members of The Society.