



THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Caring for an historic area of Birmingham

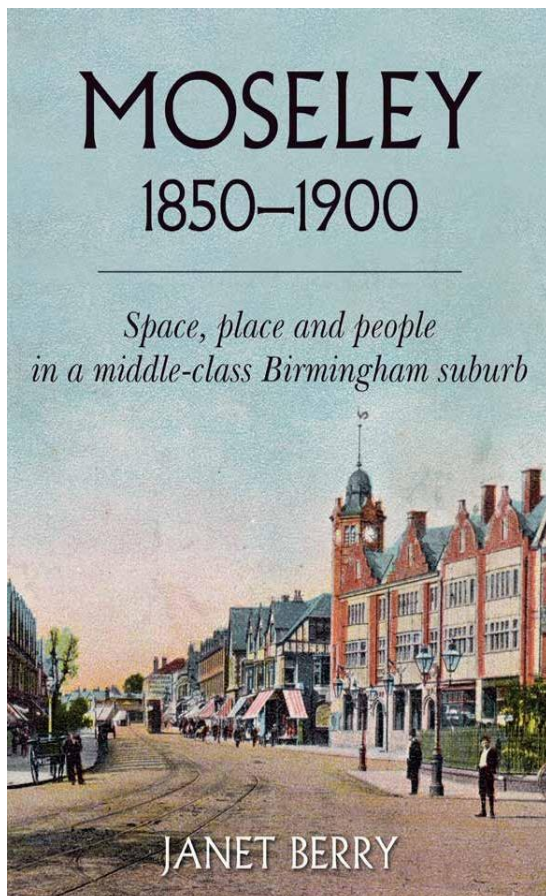
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Summer Newsletter 2023

Looking back over the past few months, the weather has definitely played its part - storms have disrupted the Jazz Festival, postponed the Moseley Festival Street Fair, but held off for the Moseley in Bloom Open Gardens Sunday in June. It was fine enough to be able to celebrate Civic Day on 17 June with five walks and, whatever the weather, we can now look forward with great pleasure to Heritage Open day on 16 September when there will be the launch of Janet Berry's new book **Moseley 1850-1900: Space, place and people in a middle-class Birmingham suburb.**



Janet (Jan) and her husband Mike moved to Moseley in 1966 from London where they both had worked. They are about to join

family in Dorset, but she has left the wonderful legacy of this book with its stories of how the newly developed middle-classes moved to Moseley to live in this idyllic rural suburb - some from Birmingham and others from further afield. She reveals why Moseley gardens are so big and debunks some of the myths surrounding the lives of women. The book tells of the arrival of the omnibus and steam trams and the passengers who headed for The Fighting Cocks, disrupting the peace of the centre of the village! It reveals what the Victorian families of Moseley were really like. The launch will be at The Hive with an opportunity to buy the book on the day at a special discounted price of £12.50. Jan will give a short talk at 2.30 p.m.

Annual General Meeting

32 members attended the meeting on May 9 at Moseley Exchange. Following the official business, Lorna Brewster, CEO of Moseley Community Development Trust was able to announce that on the following day the CDT would own the building known as The Hive as a community asset. The relevant documents from the AGM are on the website.

Moseley Village

Details of the many activities that are continuing at **The Hive** are advertised each week in Moseley Together -

<https://moseleytogether.org.uk/>

A series of discussions have been held with interest groups as to the future use of the Hive. It has also received a visit from an architect to ascertain the state of the building and it is clear that much work is required!

On the left side of **St Mary's Row** heading to the village, several properties remain vacant. On the other side things are looking brighter. **Amore** is the new name of the

refurbished pizzeria in St Mary's Row. The interior has been completely changed round with a welcoming café as you enter and the kitchen at the back. It's no longer a deli, but still specialises in pizzas – Neapolitan style.



Italian smiles from the owner, Georgio, and his business partner Alessandro's son Gennaro who is being instructed in the exacting skills of creating a pizza base. Amore is open every day except Tuesdays and Wednesdays serving not only pizzas, but other Italian dishes.

A couple of doors up you will notice that **Nazca** – a Peruvian café restaurant has opened up.

Mike and Jan Berry



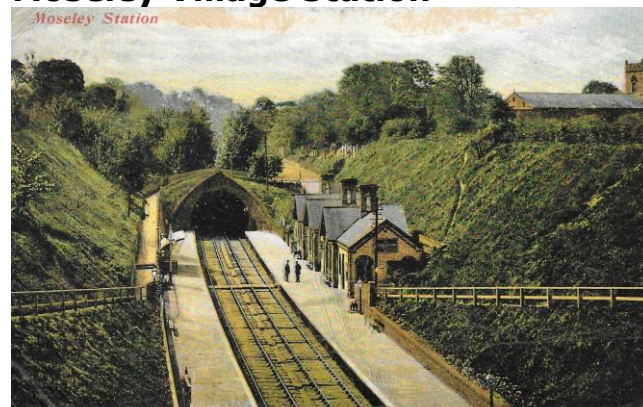
As already mentioned, Mike and Jan have lived in Moseley for over 50 years. They have been active members of the Society from the early years and have both enjoyed being involved in the many events and activities put on by the Society. Mike, who had a job in the Centre of Russian and East European Studies at Birmingham University led the Sunday morning team that cleaned the car park in Moseley until the Council finally took it over. It was a pretty grim job and dangerous on occasions. He

remembers a Mini being insecurely parked on the slope and having to stop it running backwards into cars parked opposite!

Jan worked as a primary school teacher with an enthusiasm for history, but it wasn't until she retired and helped to reinvigorate the History Group that she was able to make use of her skills. Her enthusiasm for research and local stories produced a fascinating body of work leading to a degree, a doctorate and finally the book. Many of her articles can be found on the website: <https://moseley-society.org.uk/local-history/> She leaves a thriving History Group, but will be greatly missed by all of us.

The next project will be for Mike and Jan to write their own story, which started when they both worked for the United Nations Association in London in the 50s, decorating houses in the poorer areas of the East End. Perhaps we should all be writing our stories for future local historians.

Moseley Village Station



In her book, Jan Berry tells how the opening of the station in 1867 played its part in the lives of the newly arrived Moseley residents. It was closed in 1941.

Following a successful campaign led by Moseley Forum, to re-open the Station, work is underway in Moseley, Kings Heath and Stirchley (Pineapple Road) to re-build the three stations. We had been led to expect that work would be completed by the end of this year. However, a message from the partners who are responsible for the construction of the new stations states that they have literally hit an historic brick wall which has to be rebuilt; a well that didn't appear on any records has meant a diversion and the presence of 'protected species'. The badgers delay work in the Moseley area as they can only be moved at a certain time of year. In short, the stations

are expected to be opened by the end of 2024 with trains in operation in 2025. Watch this space!

Dovecote and Icehouse

Both have been very busy with monthly openings and special events. The final openings will be on 30 September but in the meantime, the icehouse will be open for visitors to the Folk Festival and both are open during the weekend of Heritage Open Days 16/17 September. In addition to Moseley in Bloom Open Gardens, the dovecote has been entered for "It's Your Neighbourhood" run by the RHS. The dovecote meadow has been scythed and the lavender is buzzing with bees.

On 18 August, the Birmingham Community Healthcare Charity (BCHC) teamed up with the Moseley Society and set up their stalls for a Heritage in Health family day in the dovecote garden. The event was in celebration of 75 years of the NHS as well as a chance to invite staff from Moseley Hall Hospital to learn more about the history. The Trust wishes to increase the therapeutic use of the dovecote garden for patients and staff. One of the displays was about the history of infection control. Jean Dipple is an Infection and Prevention Control assistant who works with the hospital and the community.



In 1847 Dr Ignas Semmelweis discovered the importance of hand hygiene to prevent the spread of infection after comparing the mortality rate in two wards – it was much higher in the ward run by surgeons who had been working with cadavers before treating other patients without washing hands or instruments. Unfortunately, his colleagues resisted and assigned Dr Semmelweis to a lunatic asylum. Luckily, he was followed by James Lister and Louis Pasteur who did understand the important of infection control. Thanks to Covid, we all know how we should wash our hands!

Moseley Festival Street Fair



It was windy, with leaflets flying all over the place, but the sun shone and there were plenty of visitors to the postponed street fair on Saturday 19 August. Visitors were entertained by music, a variety of stalls reflecting the various groups round Moseley, including The Society. There were also tempting craft and cake stalls. We had visits from old friends and members as well as people new to the area. The photos of old Moseley attracted a lot of attention, but we found there was much interest in the other aspects of the work of the Society, including planning issues.



At the Street Fair we were asked about **MAGC**. As many members who already donate will know, this is a way of supporting people who are homeless or at risk of finding themselves on the streets. Money raised goes to help fund the Neighbourhood Outreach Worker, Anji Page, who offers help to those in need. It could be tracing a birth certificate for ID purposes, providing bus passes to get to appointments and support services, help with rent arrears and finding furniture for accommodation. Each Wednesday between 11am and 2 pm Anji runs a drop-in centre at St Columba's Church on the corner of Chantry Road where people can be offered advice and support as well as refreshments. Around Moseley there are purple collection tins. Otherwise go to the website to set up a one-off or regular donation. <https://magc.org.uk/>

Planning

We continue to respond to the Council Planning Department commenting on planning applications affecting this area. Where we can, we continue to support good applications such as the plans for Moseley Road Baths and Balsall Heath Library. Retrospective permission for extensions or additional buildings on a site often feature on the list, as do plans for alterations to houses that will create elevations that are almost totally glazed. If such plans are approved the light pollution from Moseley will be seen by astronauts on the ISS!

Recently a retrospective application for use of a house as Supported Accommodation has caused us great concern.

Supported Accommodation should provide help with everyday living to vulnerable people with a wide range of issues including mental health, learning difficulties, addictions, who rent a room in a shared house. The landlord is supposed to provide a safe, stable and a supportive place to live. While there are many good providers in Birmingham, there are also many instances where landlords are taking advantage of the extra funding they receive, offering poor accommodation with little or no support. Also, anyone looking for cheap accommodation can rent a room, which can mean that the mix of residents is unmonitored and unsafe, as confirmed by Anji Page in her submission to a Parliamentary Select Committee. She is often the only person to provide continuity in the lives of these vulnerable people.

Moseley Ward Action Plan 2022-26

This document has now been published by Birmingham City Council, along with action plans from other wards. The Action Plan (Be Bold Be Moseley) is a wish list with priorities for the Moseley Ward. They come under the headings Prosperity, Inclusivity, Safety, Health, Green and Local and can be added to at any time. The Plan was put together by our two Councillors Kerry Jenkins and Izzy Knowles following Ward meetings, consultations with local interest groups and residents. You can download the action plan from the Birmingham City website:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/download/file/27013/moseley_ward_action_plan

Moseley in Bloom



The hanging baskets and the planters in the village have been looking stunning this year thanks to the extra rain and diligence of the team responsible for the watering. The good news is that the huge success of Open Gardens in June this year will mean that there will be funds to help decorate the village next year. The schools' project will also be able to continue with the awards to this year's successful applicants being announced soon.

The planters that are part of the LTN scheme have been looking good. Moseley in Bloom asked the Council to provide perennials and annuals as well as edible plants for locals to use, as long as they leave enough for others! At the end of the season, the perennials will be replanted and sold at the next plant sale.

The Moseley in Bloom AGM is to be held at the Hive on 21 September at 7.30. All are welcome.

Moseley Road Baths

From Monday 2 October the Baths will be closing its doors to swimming and all other activities as the next major phase of building work starts. It is expected to be completed in Spring 2025.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome Magdalen Smith, Ann Emery, Dave Hewitt, Dr Shyam Madathil, Mr Tony Liburd, Mrs Rachel Smith-Chopra, Catriona Crombie, Elizabeth Dhokia, Laura Tschaplinski, Joan McGhee, Siema Akram, Sara Cummins, Dr Siobhan Daniels, David Evans and John Hudson as members of the Society.