

John Carmichael

From: <Stainedglasetc@aol.com>
To: <jlcarmichael@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2005 8:49 AM
Subject: Re: Didsbury visit

John.

On Friday afternoon I managed to find a few hours in order to search out the Old Parsonage, which I can report is still standing, and in regular use as office space for the housing department of Manchester City council.

English local government can be a many headed creature and no more so than in Manchester, a city that consists of many districts with varying economic needs and racial groupings. But rather than embarking on a brief explanation of English civics, which would make as much sense to an American as the rules of cricket (pardon my presumption) I will try to explain the situation regarding the Old Parsonage, as it was explained to me (which might not be correct) the building is in the property portfolio of the City art Gallery Department, used by the Housing Department, but situated on land in the care of the Parks Department. This situation would seem to cause a variety of responsibilities and rivalries. But I have managed to obtain some contact details, that might be of use.

1, Ruth Shrigley
 Principal Curator
 Manchester City Galleries
 Department of decorative Arts
 City Art Gallery
 Mosely Street
 M2 3JL
 Tel 0161 235 8815
 Fax 0161 235 8805
www.mcc/galleries

2, In the park there was a senior keeper (john Steedman)
 who might be a useful immediate contact,
 e-mail j.steedman@notes.manchester.gov.uk

While talking with him about the park, window and building his assistant told me that there is a collection of digitised images held at the central library that show the park and building, these in them self are of no great interest except they show a palm, which in one of the early photos which also has Fletcher Moss in it, is no more than a small plant, this palm is now a tree as tall as the roof line of the building. So if a suitable sequence of images can be found it might be possible to date when the sundial was removed by comparing the height of the tree, not a very accurate dating method, but good enough for an approximation.

I now have straight on photos inside and out, plus details of some remnants that indicate a past re-leading, the many layers of external paint would indicate that this re-leading took place several years ago, paint analyse of the lower layers could give an accurate date.

The present framing is timber and possibly original, except for the upper centre light where the dial used to be,

The only remaining inscription is at the base of the main lights that reads something like----
 Fletcher Moss of Didsbury Lancashire.

The resident of the office was a bit reticent when it came to taking dimensions, but I am sure these can be readily obtained at another time, access to the window can be obtained by just walking into the park which is open to the public during hours of daylight.

At a guess I would say that the lights are about 20" wide.

The sill height of the window being at about knee height.

I suspect that permission should be sought from the galleries department for before any other details are obtained (although I suspect that John Steedman might take some sizes if approached in the right way,

As for books, etc. It would seem that Fletcher Moss was a prolific writer, with a collection of his books and papers being held at Manchester central library.

The housing department have produced a photo copy extract of one which gives a brief guide to the house.

I have a copy waiting to be sent your way, could you send your postal address?

I will e-mail some images in the next few days, Not from this address as my card reader is being problematic at the moment, but through that of a friend.

So if you have a message appear from a, jon slopper. it should be the images.

That's about it.

Jon

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