



The Maldens and Coombe Heritage Society

(Founded 2012)

WHERE WAS THE ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW HELD?

Julian McCarthy

Of course we know where the Flower Show was held, it was in the grounds of Coombe House. Robin's article 'Flower Power' in The Village Voice (104) tells us this and I am sure for most of us, 'that is that'!

Well, yes, that is that. But then, whilst looking through Stephen Day's book 'Malden ~ Old and New', I note that, on page 30, he has included two images, one of which is a post card image (as below) depicting the Flower Show "New Malden July 19th 1911" beneath which he tantalizingly comments "*Both of these cards have been included because they show local people, but their actual locations are a mystery*"



Same detail

Well, I am afraid, I cannot leave it there and hence I needed to find out and the photo offers a great clue to the location, this being the house in the centre.

I looked at another picture, taken at the show three years earlier and there again, hidden away in the top left corner, is a small square of a timbered house which matches that in the centre of the card above.

I knew that I had the location fixed if I could find the house—assuming of course that it is still around.

So yesterday afternoon, being cold but sunny, I set off in search of the house which, from Robin's article, I knew had to be either along Traps Lane, Langley Grove, Clarence Avenue or even Darley Drive.





As I walked I thought about an earlier quest to find the location of the bridge and the waterfall and the fact that there was a Tudor-esque building in *that* picture.

The building in the last locational search turned out to be the house at the corner of Carlton Road and Langley Grove.

I resolved to start my latest search there and armed with the two postcard images and looking for a beamed frontage with a curved section I turned into Langley Grove.



Disappointingly, the house that had provided the solution before was reluctant to assist further and as I approached it became clear that the east façade (as per the photo) did not have the clearly defined curved timber detail I sought.

But then, as I carried on walking I looked at the north façade of this same timber building and there appeared to be the detail I was searching for.



Similar detail

Surely, I thought, this same building cannot be the solution to two separate location searches?

I crossed the road and looking back over my shoulder at the frontage of the house on Carlton Road, I walked up a path to someone's house and rang the doorbell and asked if the owner would mind if I took some photos. "No problem, go ahead" he said.



It is clear that it IS the same house and this confirms that the flower shows were, therefore, just north of Langley Grove. I walked back to the House turned and looked north taking photos of what were once fields where, every year there were swing boats, marquees, competitions, exhibits etc. The next time you are on a 213 and in Langley Grove think of those Summers and times when people would walk from the Village to the fair grounds.



Same trees??

