



NEWSLETTER April 2024

April 15th

**Finding the Way: a New Look at
Some Old Roads**

Philip Riden

May 20th

**Industries of Brampton along the
Hipper**

Cliff Lea

The April, May and June meetings are being held in St Thomas Church, Chatsworth Road,
Chesterfield S40 3AW

The main doors to the church are closed in the evening. Entry is through St Thomas Centre but take
the smaller door in the left hand corner rather than the entry on the right which leads to the hall.

The meetings start at 7:30pm

Members free, Visitors £3

Chesterfield and District Family Society

Who Do you Think You Are Event? May 18th 2024

10am – 4pm

ARKWRIGHT CENTRE Hardwick Drive, Arkwright Town,

Chesterfield, S44 5BS

2024 theme The Rise and Influence of an 18th Century Entrepreneur

Sir Richard Arkwright

CADLHS will be there giving advice and selling publications.

If you are trying to make some room on your bookshelves, we would be grateful for any donations
for us to sell to raise funds for the Society.

Chesterfield Court House Visit

Chris Thomason

The Chesterfield Court House on West Bars was opened in September 1965 and shortly afterwards Chris Thomason was in a party which visited from school. This is the report she wrote in her school notebook.

The Magistrates Court on West Bars was designed by Prof S Allen and Roy Keenlyside for Chesterfield Borough Council. It is built from reinforced concrete with decorative stone cladding and timber roofs clad with copper sheeting.

The building is very impressive from outside. It was surprising how spacious the interior of the building is as it doesn't look particularly large from outside.

I was impressed by the architecture, the grey stone, the angular roof and the fan-like shape. The glass panels appeared to be representing bars. As one entered the building it gave the feeling of modernity, like a modern hotel. The Y shaped entrance hall rise through the three floors. The corridors, glass and stone and the marvellous effect of the various woods, rosewood, ebony etc contribute to the effect.



The two courts, which each occupy two storeys, are in the fan shaped section. We went upstairs to Number 1 court. This room is particularly striking. The fitted furniture is wood with black leather coverings and the benches, desks, walls and ceiling are all wood. The walls are made of strips of wood which have different sized slits between them to assist the acoustics. Lights are hidden above angular wooden structures fitting with the angular roof structure. The doors are cut into the walls

so that they are almost hidden, apart from the main door which has a dark blue glass panel in it, which gives it an impressive appearance.

On the left are the seats for the press and the probation officer, who has to be in court when children were involved. Other officers of the court are in the centre with the dock behind them and behind that the steps lead down to the cells. On the right are the seats for the public. The magistrate (or magistrates depending on the type of case) sits at the centre front. Cases such as marital disputes and theft are heard here, more serious cases are heard at Derby Crown Court. There are two oaths, which can be used, one for adults and the other for those of sixteen years and under.

Downstairs the cells are arranged with the cells for men on one side and for women on the other. The cells are square without windows: they are lit by electric light with the light switches in the corridor.

The furniture, chairs and a table are all chained to the floor to prevent prisoners harming themselves. Braces, ties and shoe laces are confiscated before the prisoners are confined. The cells have plain white interiors with a heavy steel door. Set into the door is a grill for speaking through and a window so that the police can look into the cell if they want to. The women's cells are slightly larger and there are toilets down here as well. At the end of each corridor are large folding steel doors which are just wide enough for a van to reverse into for security reasons when the prisoners are led into the cells. There are waiting rooms for the police here too.

Returning upstairs we went into Number 2 Court: this is lighter than Number 1 Court which is on the north side of the building. Here different matters are dealt with, cases are more informal and the furniture can be moved unlike in Number 1 Court. Either side of the court doors blue glass screens are suspended so that they can be lowered for privacy when the courts are in session.

On the north side upstairs is the Juvenile Court. This is more informal. The court has moveable furniture and has only a low platform for the magistrate. Parents sit at the back of the room and the public are not allowed in this court.

The magistrates' and clerk's rooms are back downstairs again. These are used when the magistrates need to retire to discuss their verdict and any punishment. If they need to consult the clerk when he is in the court, a button in the retiring room is pressed and a green light shows on the clerk's desk. If the clerk is in his office a buzzer sounds as well as the light showing.

The main offices are also made of rosewood, ebony and other woods.

Downstairs at the rear of the building is the probation officer's rooms. Here the bar like architecture is even more prominent which give a more prison like feeling.

It is a very impressive new court house with interesting architectural features.

The building was listed grade II in 1998. The official listing (1376409) is accompanied by two photographs of the interior. The building continued as a courthouse until the new Courthouse was opened on Tapton Lane, in 2003 which is now the Justice Centre.



After being left empty for some time and with its condition deteriorating, the building was renamed Knightsbridge Court and was eventually converted into 30 luxury flats.

For a look inside see

<https://www.derbyshiretimes.co.uk/lifestyle/homes-and-gardens/first-look-as-chesterfields-old-magistrates-court-is-transformed-into-luxury-apartments->

Chesterfield's First Motor Bus Service addendum

A further photograph of the bus has come to light together with additional information supplied by the late Gregg Lilleker from Transpire.

This is R374, a Milnes Daimler purchased by Charles Paxton Markham, Hasland Hall, from the Duke of Portland. His Chesterfield to Hasland service started with 2 smaller Wolseys. It was extended to Grassmoor on Saturdays and it seems this 15 seater was used on this service. C.P. Markham started this service in July 1906, being the first in Chesterfield, but the poor state of the roads caused high repair costs and the service ceased by October 1908.



On the side of the bus there is a notice 'GRASSMOOR' so it's obviously in service and one of the passengers is a lady.