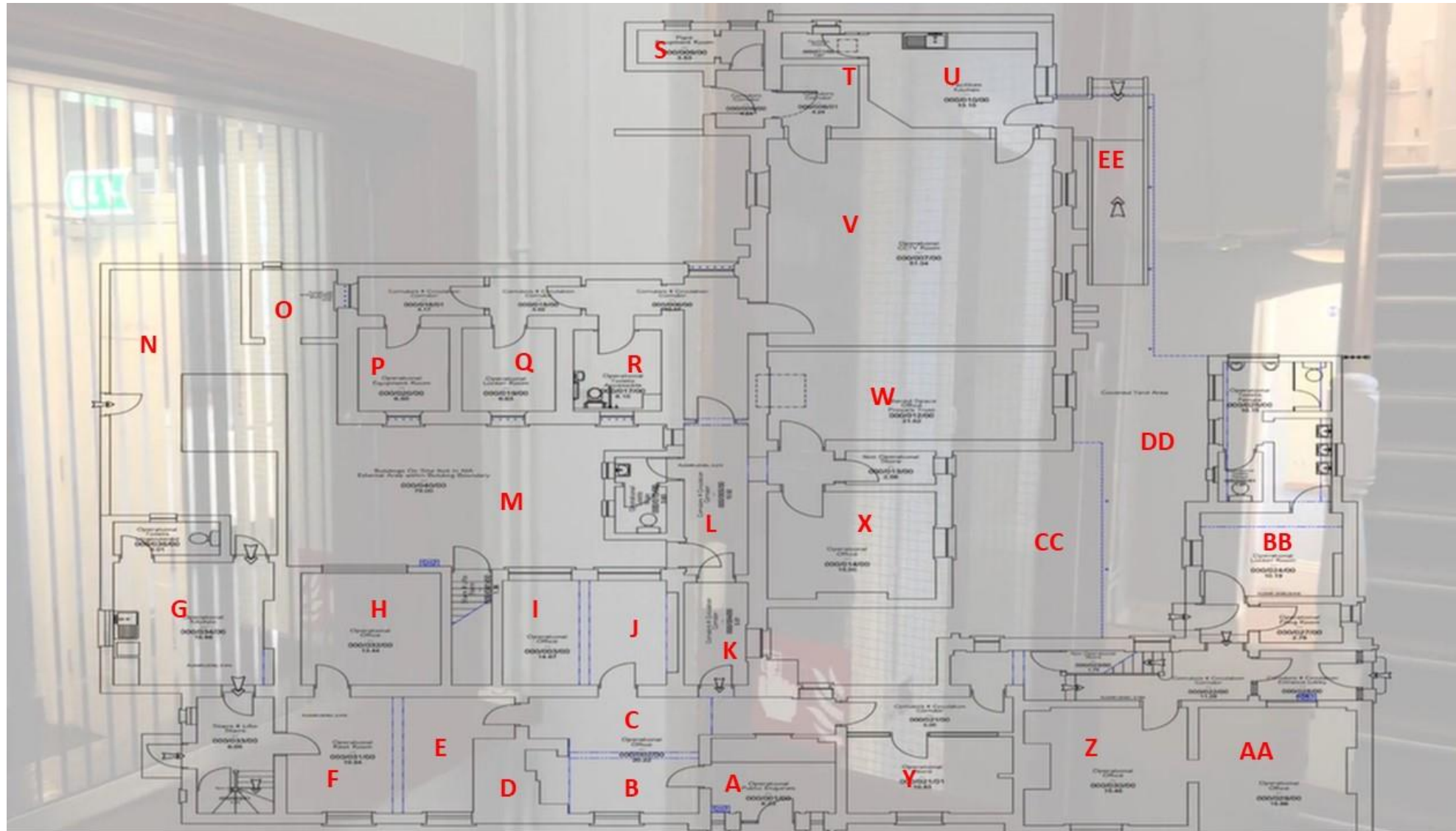


Marion Hall's Reminiscences of Sedgley Police Station

Reminiscences of Sedgley Police Station in the
1950s and 1960s, as recalled in 2009.

Ground floor plan - 2021



Marion Hall

Marion worked as civilian clerk and shorthand typist for CID - specifically in **DC Arthur Golding's office**, which was upstairs on the right of the front entrance (1st floor above area Y on the plan).

She primarily remembers **Inspector Barsted** in overall charge from the time she was there, though there were others after him.

The Inspector's House

Inspector Barsted lived with his wife and two children in the inspector's house adjoining the station. His office was downstairs on the right of the entrance (ground floor, area Y), and this had a door leading directly to and from his house (two storeys including areas Z, AA and BB).

Front desk; ground floor (left) and common room

Anyone entering the station from the street was taken through to the receiving desk on the left (poss. area B) while the first office to the left of this contained the telephones and switchboard (prob. area D). Next to this was a large common room with two windows (this would appear to be both areas E & F, subsequently divided?).

Kitchen and drying room

Behind the common room was a large kitchen and drying room, with built-in cupboards behind a huge fireplace, where officers could dry their clothes after walking the beat in wet weather etc. (think this would be areas G & H, with large fireplace and chimney breast between). This was the warmest part of the station, especially in winter, as coal fires were then the only form of heating. Sitting, working in coats was often necessary for all those on desk duties to keep warm in the coldest months.

Ground Floor Offices

Most of the officers were male back then and they had their offices at the back of the station (including areas I & J downstairs).

Marion was also sometimes required to sit in on the magistrates' court hearings and take notes in shorthand (area V).

Cleaning, cooking and upkeep

Meals were prepared in the kitchen by **Mrs Verona Hayward** (a cousin of Marion by marriage, and mother of police inspector **Martin Hayward of Dudley**). She was referred to as 'the matron' and was responsible for the cleaning, cooking, and general upkeep of the station, including polishing the red quarry tiles which ran the full length of the downstairs corridor from the inspector's office to the common room (including area C).

Upstairs offices

Upstairs, next to CID and above the front entrance was a small room which had been made into a washroom (small arched windows). At the opposite end of the first floor from the office where Marion worked was the office where the inspector's secretary Brenda Sherratt worked (3rd window along to the left of the front entrance, above Area F). Somewhere in-between there was a room for Professor Webster, the pathologist (he was very critical of frozen peas when they first appeared in the shops, apparently!).

Cells

Areas P, Q & R were the three cells for holding those who'd been brought in on a charge, and awaiting their case to be heard in the courtroom across the corridor. The cells and courtroom were constructed at the time the workhouse was converted into the station in the early 1860s. The magistrates' private rooms were adjacent but it's uncertain which area shown on the plan that would have been.

Courtyard (Area M)

In 2008/2009, the stairs shown leading from the courtyard area M descended into the old cellar (boiler room and storage, etc.).

There is an old coal chute at the front of the cellar, accessed from a metal plate at ground level outside. There were low brick arches - the ceiling may have been entirely of brick - and older stone footings were also identified, suggesting it stood partly on the foundations of an even older building.

Small Courtyard (area CC)

The small courtyard area CC was probably part of the old workhouse exercise yard. It is here in the back wall of the main station block across from area X, that old stonework was seen and noted at ground level, but extending several courses up into the later brickwork of the workhouse/station. This can also be seen from the first window on the right of the corridor leading from the station block toward the courtroom and cells.

Another cellar

Under the staircase behind area Z of the inspector's house (leading to the first floor) is a door which must have given access to a cellar that has been blocked at ground level.