



VICTORIAN CELLS

From the early 1800s to the early 1900s many cells were built of red brick, not the grand stone that Police Stations and Courts were built with.

Our Victorian cells have been recreated to a period of 1870. We have re-fabricated the iron bars on windows and the iron barred cell gates from photographs of 1870, from archives of custodial buildings.

The exhibit of an oak stock bed and hessian weave were typical of this period, a straw filled hessian mattress would also have been used for the bed. On many occasions there were groups of prisoners in each cell, not sole occupancy.

They were cold, damp and dark, often leading to disease and sickness, a half barrel bucket would have been used as a toilet, emptied many times a day by the jailer.

VICTORIAN MURDER SCENE

This murder scene has been recreated by SOCO officers from recorded crime archives, dated around 1892. As you see there are religious connotations to this crime.

The history is based on two different religious groups coming together through marriage, which lead to factions between the two religions spilling over into the marriage, leading to the husband murdering the wife with an axe.

The environment has been created with dated furniture, garments and items of that Victorian period. This is the first vision of crime scene detection where pupils can determine what clues are essential for the role of a detective ie blood typing, footprints, fingerprints, palm prints, a defiant message written in blood, the sign of the cross, etc.

How did detectives piece everything together without modern day forensic science, but with the agility of mind and experience only (Sherlock Holmes Style).

VICTORIAN WEAPONS' CELL

This exhibit shows that the early weapons of the police in the 1800s were sabres up until the very early 1900s. The sabres are shown on early photographs of policemen in the 1850s in the history books. This exhibition highlights that they are all the same design throughout but made at different periods.

The criminal weapons also on show, range from early 1800s to 1900s some of which are quite ruthless; solid brass knobs on elasticised handle, wooden clubs, early Chinese weapons and a rope knot stinger used to blind people who were being robbed.

Also on display are local police memorabilia and crime scene recordings in the note books of the police in attendance. An early counterfeit system to produce half crowns, seized in 1892 made of lead also forms part of this exhibition.

CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHY FROM 1929 – 2001

This particular exhibit shows cameras that have been used for photographing both criminals and crime scenes from 1929.

The early cameras show a system of developing negative plates to photographs which was time consuming and cumbersome. Very often mirrors were placed behind the head of a suspect so that with one shot you could achieve a side elevation and full front elevation photograph at the same time. The cameras also show how measuring implements were introduced throughout this period, which were simple measuring rods in feet and inches.

Only in the 1950s were attachments designed for greater focusing and frames for fingerprints and footprinting photography. This exhibition also shows how smaller and more user friendly cameras were developed and used, such as the 1960s instamatics and on to box brownies and high resolution focusing cameras. Also displayed are a number of power packs, flash bulbs and attachments.

The exhibition shows the evolution of crime scene photography in its development over 70 years. No cameras in this exhibition are digital, therefore, cannot speak to computers and take too long to process and are now rendered useless.

Modern day photography has moved on to digital imaging processing for faster and better results to help the officers solve crime more effectively.