

City Of National Westminster Bank Press Release

Natwest Returns To Refurbished Premises In Abergavenny.

The work which has recently been completed on the renovation of national Westminster Banks premises at 9 High Street, Abergavenny marks another milestone in the history of this grade 2 listed building.

The structure is an amalgam of parts of widely differing ages. The main part is formed by the remains of a large early 18th century three story townhouse in a huge u-shaped plan with wings of the 'U' at the rear of the house.

The original timber framed walls, with wattle and daub infill and timber floors have been preserved, as has the facade which was a Victorian rebuild in the Neo-Classical style.

Among the many interesting features discovered in the renovation was a clock which appears to have been manufactured by G. Goulding, a local clock Smith who had premises in Abergavenny from 1832-68. An unusual pattern of staircases which has been built over several decades had created a complicated inter floor relationship and a steel cage which dropped around the safe area was also identified. This appears to have been operated by machinery from an earlier Manager's bedroom which was directly above the strongroom, but the actual device remains a mystery because the machinery could not be found.

Lighting and ventilation shafts running through to the basement were also unearthed between the wings, together with a set of stone steps. Two fine arch panelled doors were discovered and these have been donated by the Bank to the local museum.

Architects acting were Messrs Alex Robertson, Peter Francis & partners of Cardiff and the main contractors were Beaman and Hodges.

Mr. Griff Owen, Branch Manager, commented, "NatWest Bank's connections with this historic building go back to 15 January 1868 when the former National Provincial Bank of England purchased the business from the Monmouthshire Agricultural and Commercial Bank. I am pleased with the refurbished surroundings and the manner in which some important architectural features have been preserved. I am also grateful to both customers and staff for bearing with us in temporary premises while the renovation was being carried out."

Copied from original Abergavenny Local History Street Survey 1980