

Royal Visit to St Philip's Church – 28 March 1957

Her Majesty, the Queen, and His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh visited Repton School and other places in Staffordshire and Derbyshire. After tea with the Mayor and Mayoress of Derby in the Council house, the royal party, left at six o'clock for their final engagement of the day. Together with local dignitaries and clergy, they travelled along Nottingham Road, Chaddesden Park Road and Buxton Road to be met by a crowd estimated at 5,000 outside St Philip's church.

Many people camped out on the land adjoining St Philip's vicarage on Taddington Road and waited eagerly for the procession to appear. Mrs. Nellie Bowler, of 74 Copes Way, and her eight-year-old twin daughters, Marian and Elaine, had been waiting opposite the church since 10:15 that morning.



Arrangements had been made for Her Majesty to visit the new church of St Philip's and give royal approbation to the work. A choir, fully robed, waited in a line along the pathway outside the tower of the church. The Queen and the royal party were greeted at the gate by the Bishop of Derby (Dr. A. E. J. Rawlinson) then welcomed to the church by the Vicar, the Rev Alfred Conway, and were conducted around the interior. The Queen and the Duke praised the modern interior and the dual purpose of St. Philip's Church in which the church hall was divided from the church by a sliding partition. They showed great interest in the new stone from which the church was built. Fifteen minutes later, the royal visitors signed the visitors' book and then left to join the royal train at Spondon station.

Local historian Peter Cholerton says that one of his earliest memories of Chaddesden is standing on a wall at the junction of Wood Road and Max Road to watch the royal procession pass.

Jennifer Guy remembers: "As a child, I lived in Chaddesden Lane, opposite the entrance to the Scout Hut between about 1950 and 1964. Perhaps the most vivid memory was when Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh came down the Lane. We sat on the top of a six foot stone wall that then existed on the right of 105 Chaddesden Lane and we got quite a few waves from both Royals."

Chaddesden Historical Group

