

# **Firefighters gather to remember brave colleague who died in Dalry Road bar fire**

## **Firefighters paused to remember colleague Ewan Williamson who died fifteen years ago at the Balmoral Bar fire in Edinburgh**

A Commemoration Service was held at the James Braidwood statue on Parliament Square in Edinburgh on Friday, 12 July and was attended by Firefighter Williamson's family, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Chief Officer Ross Haggart, Deputy Lord Provost, Lezley Marion, as well as representatives from the Fire Brigades Union.

During the Service, a minute's silence was observed followed by a wreath laying ceremony.

CO Haggart said: " As we mark 15 years since he lost his life in the line of duty, Ewan Williamson and his loved ones will be in the thoughts of firefighters everywhere.

"Ewan's ultimate sacrifice reminds us of all of the extraordinary lengths our firefighters go to protect our communities.

"The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service honours Ewan's dedication and bravery. We commemorate his life and work with pride, and we will ensure he is remembered always."



Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Ewan's family described him as having a "an infectious smile and a huge heart that we have missed every day since his tragic passing".

They told those who gathered at the service that their thoughts are with the families of every firefighter who watch their loved ones routinely put themselves in harm's way.

At 00:38am, on 12 July 2009, Firefighter Williamson was a member of the first attending crews at a fire in the basement of the Balmoral Bar on Dalry Road in Edinburgh.

As the devastating fire spread, Ewan and his colleagues were deployed to tackle the fire in the basement and ground floor levels.

This enabled other SFRS personnel to carry out multiple rescues of occupants from domestic flats in the three floors above, whose lives were endangered by the smoke and flames.



## Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Ewan, 35, who was a member of the Green Watch at Tollcross Fire Station, entered the building wearing breathing apparatus as part of the efforts to extinguish the fire. Tragically, he became trapped during firefighting operations and lost his life in the line of duty.

A total of 16 people, including a baby, were rescued that night, an outcome that could have been very different had it not been for the bravery of Ewan and his colleagues responding to the incident.

Fire Brigades Union Regional Chair, Gus Sproul, said: "Firefighter Ewan Williamson paid the ultimate sacrifice serving the public. 15 years on from this tragic fire, the FBU and our members continue to reflect on his loss. Ewan will never be forgotten, his family, colleagues and friends are in our thoughts today."

Councillor Lezley Marion Cameron, Depute Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, said: "Today on the 15-year anniversary of the Balmoral Bar fire at which Firefighter Ewan Williamson

tragically lost his life, we honour Ewan's memory, his service and his sacrifice.

"On that fateful day, and on every day since; as is the case today, and shall be tomorrow, those working in our emergency services face danger and risk with bravery and courage in their duty to keep each of us, and our communities, safe.

"This is public service of the most noble and selfless kind.

"The debt we owe, and our duty to each of them is to do all we can to ensure everyone facing danger and risk on the frontline are kept as safe and secure as possible in their line of duty."