

# Forgotten history coming back to life at The Lost Close

**While renovating The Lost Close just off The Royal Mile the owners found an engine in the attic.**

The rare 19th century Crossley Otto Silent engine is one of only three in existence (the other two are in the US and in Denmark) and it has now been restored and given pride of place by moving it downstairs to the underground vaults. The engine is in near original condition, but whether it was installed in the building or bought second hand

Research revealed a royal connection. In the 1800s, Edinburgh Police Chambers and Balmoral Castle, the Royal Family's Scottish residence, had the same system installed; adding to the royal connection, this rediscovered engine had originally been installed in the short lived "Royal Aquarium" at Waverley, before being moved to the police chambers in 1881 where it was installed for the purpose of ventilation.

The story of the engine will be told in May at an event held at The Scottish Storytelling Centre. Details below.

Andrew Landsburgh, Director and Founder of CoDE Concepts, said "This is one of the most exciting finds in Scotland. We found it during The Court's renovation, posted a photo online not knowing what we had, and suddenly experts from around the world were contacting us telling us we'd uncovered something incredible.

"What began as a refurbishment turned into the discovery of a vital piece of Edinburgh, and the world's industrial heritage.

This engine connects us directly to Scotland's innovative past and the very beginnings of technology which still powers the modern world. We've brought it down from the attic to The Lost Close, the underground vaults of the building, where visitors can experience this historic find firsthand."

The story of this extraordinary discovery will be featured in an upcoming documentary titled 'Potential Energy' airing from 23<sup>rd</sup> May, which delves into how the engine was found, its relocation from the attic to The Lost Close, underground vaults of the building and the possibilities of restoring it for modern use.

The engine is currently on display at The Lost Close. To mark this discovery, The Lost Close is launching the Scottish Innovations Tour this June, exploring the country's contributions to innovation and industry. Visitors will journey through The Lost Close, now the permanent home of the Crossley 'Otto Silent' engine, and uncover Edinburgh's role in shaping global technological progress.

**James Armandary, Tourism Development Lead of The Lost Close, said** "This is an incredibly exciting addition to The Lost Close. It's not every day you uncover a piece of engineering history that bridges the gap between Scotland's past innovations and technology we take for granted today.

"This building continues to surprise us with its storied history and with the launch of the Scottish Innovations Tour, visitors will not only be able to see the engine up close but also explore Edinburgh's long-overlooked role in shaping global industry."

The Lost Close, hidden for nearly two centuries beneath layers of rubble from the Great Fire, was also rediscovered during renovations in 2019.



<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/potential-energy-documentary-premiere-qa-underground-engine-discovery-tickets-1330781375919>