

Edinburgh bombing raids remembered in new book

A captivating account of the almost-forgotten bombing raids on Edinburgh and Leith during World War 2 has hit bookshelves alongside an exhibition at the city's Central Library.

Featuring high-quality recently discovered police archive photographs and fascinating official reports, the book combines tragedy and farce to meticulously document the experience of the victims and survivors of up to 15 bombing raids which took place from 1939 to 1942.

Former police chief turned author, Tom Wood, combed a unique archive which had been passed to Edinburgh Lothian and Borders Police Historical Society (ELBPHS), and has produced a fascinating account of Edinburgh during wartime to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the end of the conflict.

The book, [The Bombing of Edinburgh & Leith 1939-1942](#), is published by Ringwood Publishing and contains details of the 19 lives lost and photographs of bomb sites in Drylaw, Leith, Restalrig and Portobello – where three unexploded bombs lie 30ft underground to this day.

One of the most poignant accounts is of the deaths of sister and brother, seven-year-old Morag and five-year-old Ronald McArthur, who perished in a raid on Crewe Place, Drylaw, in September 1940. Documents in the archive suggest they may have survived if air raid alerts had been sounded earlier, giving

them a chance to make it to the “Anderson” bomb shelter, and following a public outcry the alert procedure was changed.



Site of Crewe Place bombing in September, 1940

Tom Wood said: “The archive is an important and fascinating history of this extremely dangerous time, which was at the peak of the Battle of Britain and when German invasion was thought to be imminent. To this day, few people know about the extent of bombing over Edinburgh and sadly there is no memorial to the 19 people who lost their lives.”

The archive and photographs will feature in an exhibition at the Central Library in George IV Bridge until 30 September and will be supported by a number of public lectures at the same venue on 11 June, 16 July and 13 August which are free and can be booked on the library website.

The official launch of the book is at the Royal Scots Club in Abercrombie Place on 24 May which will be an immersive experience and feature a rationing-era lunch from the 1940s and guests are encouraged to wear WW2 attire and 1940s

clothing. Tickets can be booked on <https://royalscotclub.com/event/ww2-bombing-luncheon/>

Net proceeds from the book will be donated to ELBPHS and it can be ordered direct from [Ringwood Publishing](#) or on the [Amazon website](#).



Duff Street Distillery was destroyed in a bombing raid.