

The Bombing of St Helier

Gerald Palmer



1979
Watercolour
38 x 61cm

Below Sepp Mahler is a smaller watercolour by the Jersey born artist Gerald Palmer which was painted in 1976 in the artist's celebrated realist style.

The scene depicts a dramatic moment in the Islands history on 28th June 1940 when the German Luftwaffe strafed and bombed St. Helier harbour as a precursor to occupying Jersey for five years. The air attacks took people by surprise and led to nine civilian deaths and a trail of devastation with the docks on fire and the potato barrels scattered amongst the terrifying chaos.

The existence of the painting only came to light in 2010 when the Parish decided to hold a commemoration of the bombing raid on the town. A reception was held on the Albert Quay where evidence of shrapnel damage can still be seen and the refurbished plaque in memory of the victims of the bombing was unveiled. Several eye-witnesses spoke movingly of their experiences. A similar event was held in 2011 in the Town Hall where the loan painting was unveiled by the artist in its new position in the Assembly Room.