# The chilling bathtub of John Childs returns to public display at true crime museum



The gruesome history of John Childs, known as the UK’s most prolific hitman, has resurfaced with the display of the very bathtub he used to dismember six of his victims. This macabre artefact is now on exhibit at The True Crime Museum in Hastings, a fitting locale for such a chilling relic. The bathtub has sparked renewed interest in Childs’ heinous crimes, which occurred between 1974 and 1978, during which he charged £2,000 per victim. One of his most tragic victims was just a 10-year-old boy, who was killed alongside his father in a senseless act of violence.

Childs's performance was not merely that of a criminal, but a calculated killer who lured his victims to his flat in Poplar before shooting them. After committing the murders, he would dispose of their bodies in the very bath he now used as a horrifying tool for dismemberment. Reports from Childs’ trial in 1979 noted the especially gruesome methods he employed, including attempts to feed a victim's remains through a mincing machine.

The bathtub, removed from Childs' flat in early 1980 by his great-uncle, Joel Griggs described how it became an unintended memorial, initially planted with flowers in memory of one of Childs' victims. In an ironic twist, Griggs played with matchbox cars in the same bathtub as a child, unaware of its grisly history until years later. Speaking to a local newspaper, he recounted, “I was in my 20s or 30s when I learned from my dad where the bath actually came from – I was like ‘why didn’t you tell me?’”

John Childs’ criminal career began with a string of burglaries before he escalated to murder. His first victim, Terrence 'Teddy Bear' Eve, was executed in 1974, followed by the tragic double murder of George Brett and his son, Terry, the very next year. With a total of six confirmed murders, Childs solidified his infamy, earning the infamous title of 'The East London Butcher.' His modus operandi involved not only the shocking use of a bread knife and hacksaw but also an attempt to incinerate remains in his home.

According to various reports, Childs' case remains lesser-known compared to other serial killers such as Peter Sutcliffe and Fred and Rose West, despite the horrific nature of his crimes. The remains of his victims have never been located, and the weapons used for the gruesome dismemberments were never recovered, which has left a cloud of mystery surrounding his case.

The re-emergence of the bathtub in public discourse highlights not only the historical brutality of Childs’ actions but also prompts discussions about the cultural representations of crime and punishment in Britain. The True Crime Museum serves as a space where these dark histories can be examined, providing an educational perspective on the lives affected by such criminal horrors. Griggs' aspiration is that artefacts like the bathtub can convey an undeniable aura of the past, enabling people to reflect on the human experiences intertwined with such tragedies. With each exhibit, the museum aims to make these chilling stories known, ensuring that another generation does not forget the horrors that can arise from criminality.

As the investigation into John Childs’s life and crimes continues to find resonance in contemporary society, it serves as a cautionary tale about violence, memory, and the relics of our darker past.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14749755/The-bathtub-Britans-prolific-hitman-used-bread-knife-hack-saw-dismember-victims.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Childs_%28murderer%29)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14749755/The-bathtub-Britans-prolific-hitman-used-bread-knife-hack-saw-dismember-victims.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Childs_%28murderer%29), [[4]](https://www.murderpedia.org/male.C/c/childs-john.htm)
* Paragraph 3 – [[5]](https://www.mylondon.news/news/uk-world-news/19-london-criminals-serving-most-27411507), [[6]](https://westside.pictures/programme/confessions-of-a-hitman-the-john-childs-story)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14749755/The-bathtub-Britans-prolific-hitman-used-bread-knife-hack-saw-dismember-victims.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/murder-houses-serial-killers-murderers-17054315), [[6]](https://westside.pictures/programme/confessions-of-a-hitman-the-john-childs-story)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14749755/The-bathtub-Britans-prolific-hitman-used-bread-knife-hack-saw-dismember-victims.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Childs_%28murderer%29), [[5]](https://www.mylondon.news/news/uk-world-news/19-london-criminals-serving-most-27411507)
* Paragraph 6 – [[4]](https://www.murderpedia.org/male.C/c/childs-john.htm), [[7]](https://www.killercentral.com/john-childs-data-file/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14749755/The-bathtub-Britans-prolific-hitman-used-bread-knife-hack-saw-dismember-victims.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Childs_%28murderer%29> - John Childs, also known as Bruce Childs, was a British hitman and serial killer from East London. Between 1974 and 1978, he was convicted of six murders, including that of a 10-year-old boy. Childs charged £2,000 per victim and dismembered their bodies in his flat in Poplar, using a bread knife and hacksaw. He was sentenced to six concurrent life sentences in 1979. The remains of his victims were never found, and no murder weapons were uncovered. Childs is known as the UK's most prolific hitman.
3. <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/murder-houses-serial-killers-murderers-17054315> - The article explores notorious crime scenes associated with infamous British killers. It highlights the homes of serial killers like John Christie, who hid the bodies of five prostitutes in his Notting Hill home, and Nathan Matthews, who murdered his stepsister Becky Watts. The piece provides shocking images and details about the secret lives of these murderers, offering a glimpse into the gruesome realities behind their crimes.
4. <https://www.murderpedia.org/male.C/c/childs-john.htm> - John Childs was a British serial killer and contract killer active between 1974 and 1978. He was convicted of six murders, including that of a 10-year-old boy. Childs dismembered his victims' bodies and cremated them in the fireplace of his London home. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1980 and remains incarcerated. The remains of his victims were never found, and no murder weapons were uncovered.
5. <https://www.mylondon.news/news/uk-world-news/19-london-criminals-serving-most-27411507> - The article lists 19 London criminals serving whole life orders, meaning they will die behind bars. Among them is John Childs, an East London hitman who killed six people between 1974 and 1978. Childs was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1980, but his victims' remains were never found, and no murder weapons were uncovered. He is known as the UK's most prolific hitman.
6. <https://westside.pictures/programme/confessions-of-a-hitman-the-john-childs-story> - This documentary, 'Confessions of a Hitman: The John Childs Story,' delves into the life of John Childs, Britain's most prolific hitman. In 1979, Childs pleaded guilty to the murders of six people, including a ten-year-old child. He claimed to have set up a contract killing business with two other notorious criminals, disposing of the victims in the fireplace of his East London council flat. The documentary explores his confessions and the questions surrounding the truth of his claims.
7. <https://www.killercentral.com/john-childs-data-file/> - John Childs was a British serial killer and contract killer active between 1974 and 1978. He was convicted of six murders, including that of a 10-year-old boy. Childs dismembered his victims' bodies and cremated them in the fireplace of his London home. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1980 and remains incarcerated. The remains of his victims were never found, and no murder weapons were uncovered. Childs is known as the UK's most prolific hitman.