

History of a BWE Eiffel Tower Telephone

Introduction - Very often, it will take years for a collector to find the antique telephone that will enhance their collection, unless of course unlimited funds are available. That was certainly the case leading to this telephone joining the collection.

It also highlights the need for patience and an understanding that when we are looking for a rare item, we may be very unlikely to find it in good, complete condition.

An unexpected bonus here was that the detailed history of this telephone was known by the previous owner

In the following text, any features worth noting are highlighted in Blue.

Made somewhere between 1890 and 1905, at the British Western Electric factory at Some
model/reference numbers and some diagrams from other documents listed in the Bibliography will also be used in this document.

Provenance - This particular telephone was installed at the Workshops of the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade. Pictured to the right is the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade old Eastern Hill Station. After restoration, in 19xx the station has become the Brigade Museum.

The telephone was installed in the office of the Workshop Manager, Mr Robert Barker.

Robert Barker started

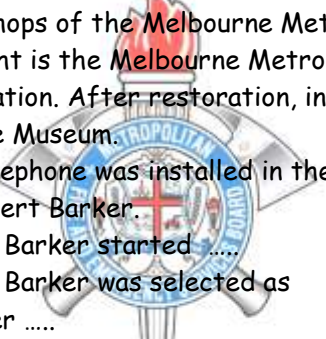
Robert Barker was selected as Manager

On his retirement in 1953 he was allowed to keep the (by now obsolete) telephone as a memento.

The phone then spent approximately 60 years of storage and some use as a toy and occasional conversation piece.

Robert's grand-daughter became concerned at the deteriorating condition of the telephone and wanted to see it retained as a historical item.

made the telephone available the collection.



DATE THE PICTURE OF ROBERT BAXTER

When did he start in the Fire Brigade?

When did he become workshop Manager?

When was the pictured building constructed?



Eastern Hill Fire Station opening, 1893.

Restoration - This particular
Button feet





The completely restored telephone, now with a "correct" handset.