

TUNED IN

Ken Taylor, Museum volunteer and member of Oxford and District Amateur Radio Society (ODARS), explores how objects in the Marconi Collection worked.

Marconiphone Baby Crystal Receiver



Maker: Marconiphone Co. Ltd.

Origin: England

Date Created: c. 1924

Provenance: Presented by the Marconi Corporation

Materials: Plastic, galena, nickel, steel, Bakelite

Inv: 58056

The Marconi Company began producing receivers for the domestic market in 1922 under the Marconiphone brand name.

The Baby Crystal Receiver was the entry-level set and was advertised at £1 7s 6d.



Marconiphone Baby Crystal Receiver (Inv: 58056)

In the following year, the BBC started broadcasting and this set is stamped with the BBC logo to show type approval.

The circuitry is extremely simple and required no power supply, just a decent aerial and earth connection which would be connected to the A and E terminals.

Sensitive headphones were connected to the T terminals. A switch was then set to one of two positions, depending on the length of the aerial.

TUNED IN

Ken Taylor, Museum volunteer and member of Oxford and District Amateur Radio Society (ODARS), explores how objects in the Marconi Collection worked.



Marconiphone Baby Crystal Receiver (Inv: 58056)

The Cat's Whisker (the short piece of wire in contact with the galena crystal) is then adjusted for maximum sensitivity and the tuning lever readjusted. The instruction manual included a warning to disconnect the aerial and earth during a thunder storm.

A booklet explaining aerials was also included with every set purchased.

Under normal conditions of reception, and with a good aerial, the Marconiphone Universal Baby Crystal receiver would give clear reception on headphones within a range of 20 miles from a station working on 300-500 metres wave-length. At a range of 100 miles, this receiver would give equally good reception from the Daventry High Power Station, simply by withdrawal of a plug and insertion of a 1600-metre loading coil.