



Room 7's Big Questions:



Were there telephones in 1872?
Were there cameras in 1872?

Created by Room 7 - a Year 1 and 2 class to help celebrate the
Hamilton East School Reunion
1872-2022

Where did our questions come from?

After viewing this black and white photograph of students from Hamilton East School, the children wanted to know who would have taken this photo? The teacher? Did the teachers back in 1872 have mobile telephones like the teachers do now? Could their telephones take photographs?

Their original ideas were: yes they would have had mobile telephones but not the big ones (like the current telephones the teachers have). They probably had mini mobile phones...



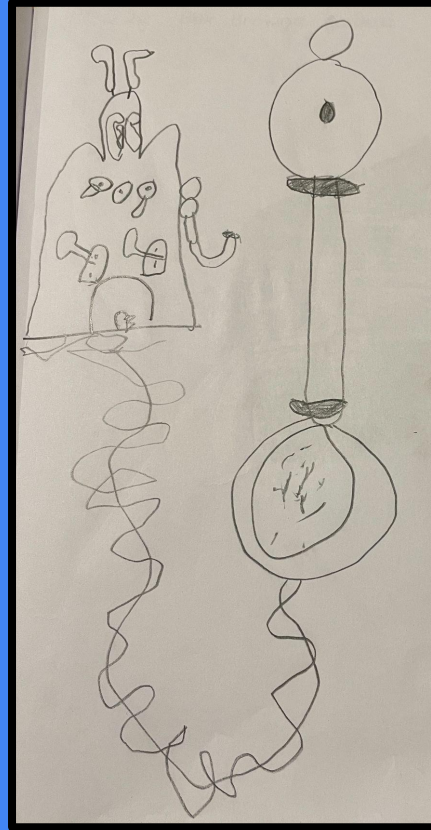
The mysterious object hanging on the wall in the office.

We went for a walk over to the office to see “something” hanging on the wall outside the staffroom. After some deliberation we agreed it was a very old telephone. How old? Well after looking at some photographs and information on the internet, we think it may have been used in the early 1900’s. The first telephone was demonstrated in 1876 by its inventor Alexander Graham Bell.

Could this telephone have been used to take photographs too? Yes the children thought it was possible if it had a really long cord.

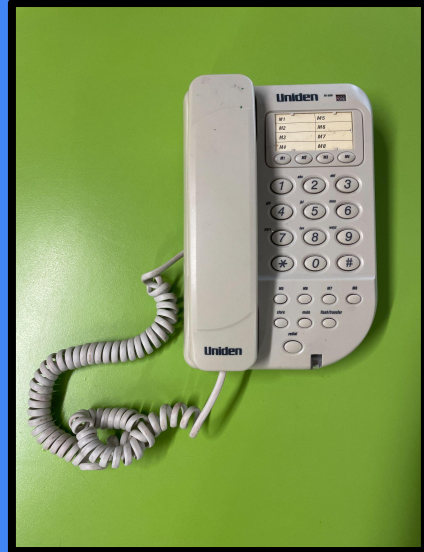


Obviously time for more investigation into cameras and telephones. But before that we all got to have a turn at pretending to use this phone and sketch it.



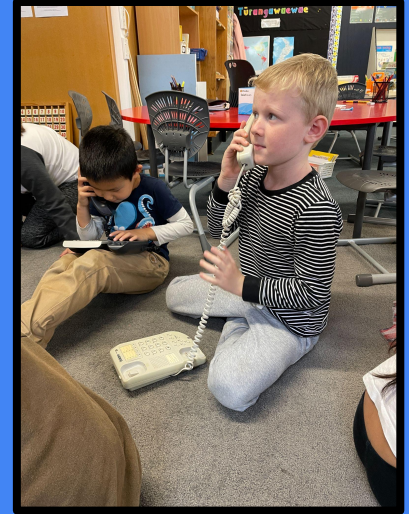
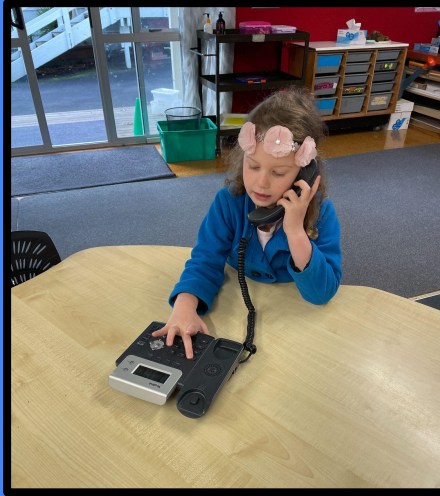
More telephones to play with:

We were loaned some “old” telephones to have a look at and a play with. Then we looked them up on the internet and tried to put them into a sort of timeline from oldest to newest:



Now the big question: do these telephones take photos?

No but now we
wondered how
they worked?



To answer this question we had to do some Science.

We made cup and string telephones. It was quite chaotic but eventually we all made a set of 2 cups connected by approximately 2 metres of string.

After conducting some experiments in the classroom, we took our telephones outside to test them out further. It did take awhile for the children to understand they didn't need to shout into the cups. Eventually they realised the telephones worked best when you spoke quietly into the cup but you needed to keep the string tight. How were we sure they worked? We whispered a number into our cup and our buddy on the other end of our telephone string held up the right number of fingers - we had our evidence that they worked.

When asked how do these telephones work, the children could explain it's because vibrations travel down the string!

Some photographs of us trying out our cup telephones:

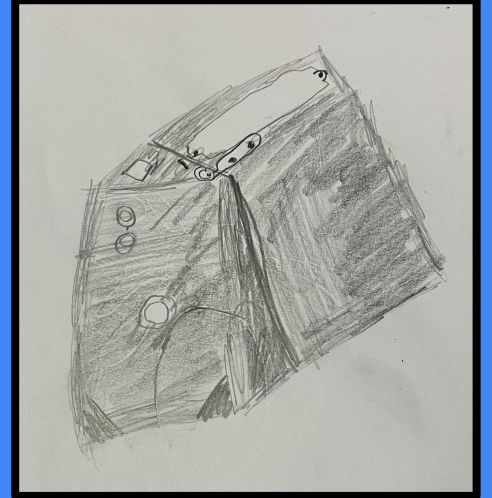
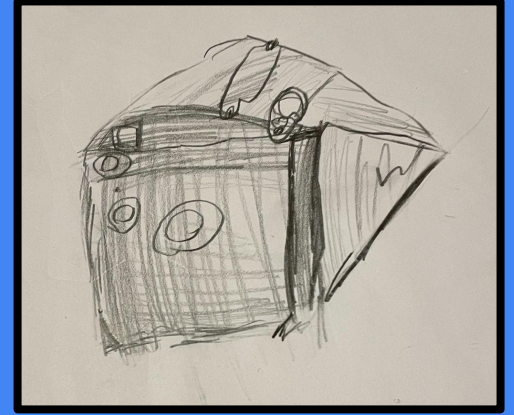
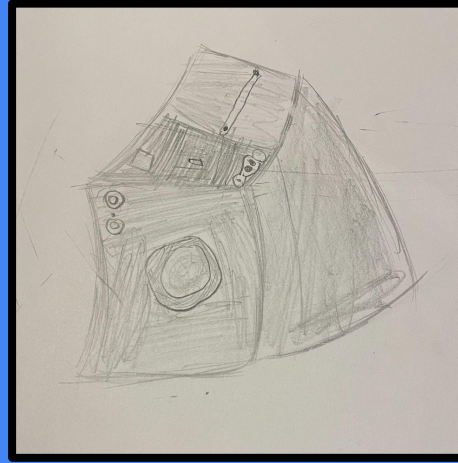
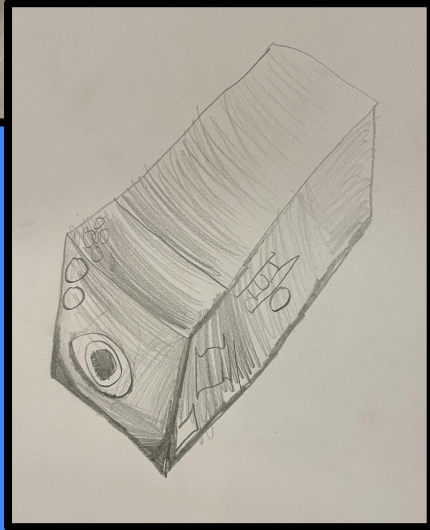


Now to find out about cameras.

We were really lucky to be able to look at a Box Brownie camera. After looking at the camera we watched a movie on [How to use a Kodak Brownie Camera](#). It looked very complicated - opening up the box, putting in a roll of film and winding it until a number showed in one of the windows. Again we used the internet to find out when these cameras were invented and found out that they were not released until the 1900's. Again we got out our sketch books, this time we had a go at doing a 3D drawing.



Some of our 3D sketches



So ... to answer the children's questions:

Were there telephones in 1872?

No, the 1st telephone was demonstrated and patented in 1876.

Were there cameras in 1872?

Yes the 1st camera was invented in 1816. So the first photographs of our school would have been taken by a professional photographer. Cameras were not mass produced (the Box Brownie) until the early 1900s, so no the first teachers at Hamilton East would not have taken photographs like the teachers do in 2022.