

Научно-исследовательская работа

Иностранный язык

Why are the telephone booths in England red?

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Introduction

In the modern media red telephone box can be seen as a symbol of Great Britain. Does the colour have anything to do with the flag of England? Does the telephone box have a more interesting and deep history?

The aim of the research is

to discuss why the telephone booths in England are red?

The tasks are:

- to learn the history of the telephone;
- to research the history of a telephone booths as a famous culture symbol of Great Britain;
- to assess if there is a future for phone boxes in our modern life with mobile phones.

The Most Iconic Symbol of Great Britain

The History of Telephone

It is well known that the telephone was invented by Alexander Graham Bell, but his primary focus was on helping deaf students communicate. Both Bell's mother and wife were deaf and became the inspiration for his work.

One of Bell's pupils was Mabel Hubbard, the daughter of a wealthy Massachusetts family, with whom he fell in love and married Mabel. In 1876 Alexander Bell invented the first telephone. On his desk, Bell kept a photo of his beloved Mabel; written on the back, in his own hand, it says: "the girl for whom the telephone was invented."

The British Telephone Booth

Back when Mr. Bell invented the telephone, it was a luxury in many countries, not available to ordinary people. In England, it was used only for the needs of the Royal Palace. Then, phones became public and were first installed in stores, but because of the noise and the large number of people, it was impossible to talk there.

So, it was decided to take them out on the street.

The first standard design was released in 1921, called prosaically Kiosk no.1, or K1. First, the silver color was chosen- it was simply and without frills.

But the English like to make everything beautiful.

In 1924, the General Post Office launched a competition to upgrade the booths. The Royal Fine Art Commission invited three respected architects.

The winner was the architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, who was inspired by the tomb of Sir John Soane.

So Giles' first design became known as the K2, but there's been lots of variations over time.

Later other versions K3, K4, K5 were developed.

K6 version - re-designed by Sir Scott in 1935 -became the iconic Red Telephone Box.

There is an opinion, that during the great London fogs, when nothing was visible at arm's length, it was decided, that it had to be made bright, to make the phone easy to find in case of an emergency.

So, the silver colour turned into a bright red, which is visible even through thick fog.

Besides the phone booth must be:

- transparent so that the person inside can be seen.
- protected from street hooligans.

But not all phone booths in the UK are red. For example, in Kingston upon Hull, phones were installed cream-colored, since they were not part of the telephone network in the UK, but belonged to a city provider.

The Future of the Red Telephone Booth

Unfortunately, every year the number of red booths decreases. Now everyone uses mobile phones. But to preserve the cultural symbol of Britain, the booths are being converted into

- art-objects,
- ATM (cash machines)
- libraries
- storage points for first aid kits

- mobile phone charging stations
- a small café
- a tiny repair studio
- a small office

One of the most unusual use of a telephone box was transforming it into a living aquarium.

The Anglophile honour is to buy your own red phone booth. But you should keep in mind a couple of things– the phone box is very heavy and will require special transport and probably a crane.

Conclusion

Working on this research allowed us to learn about the inventor of the telephone, Mr. Alexander Bell. Interestingly, the phone box design had many variations, but thanks to architect Sir Scott, the iconic symbol of Britain has got its traditional shape, and because of the Great London fogs and rainy weather – red color.

But the most pleasant thing for us was to learn that people continue to preserve such important historical symbols and give them a new life.

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