

The History of Milton Keynes IN 100 Objects... ...the first 15

Bletchley Park

Home of the Codebreakers and Britain's Best Kept Secret



The Duddery

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During World War Two, the **Enigma** cipher machine was predominantly used by the German Armed Forces to encipher communications. These messages were then transmitted via radio (wireless) using Morse code.

As the set-up of the machine changed daily, instructions were provided to the machine operator in the form of a monthly setting sheet. A network of British wireless operators listened day and night for these wireless communications – **'traffic'** – and fed the intercepted enciphered German messages to Bletchley Park.

There are approximately 158 million, million, million ways to set-up an Enigma machine and these settings are known as the **"key"**, which changed daily. The Codebreakers at Bletchley Park were cracking numerous daily keys and were therefore deciphering intercepted enemy traffic every day. The contents of these messages, once cracked, provided vital intelligence on enemy Military activities.

Bletchley Park's obtaining of this intelligence and its resulting outcomes is reputed to have shortened World War Two by approximately two years and saved the lives of countless people.



A U-Boat Enigma machine showing the internal Rotors

TOP SECRET

BLETCHLEY PARK
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