

The background of the entire cover is a faded, blue-tinted image of a Doctor Who character, likely the Tenth Doctor, holding a sonic screwdriver. The character's face is on the left, and the screwdriver is held vertically in the center-right.

# DOCTOR WHO

THE CLASSIC SERIES SONIC SCREWDRIVERS  
A Compiled History



by Brian A Terranova

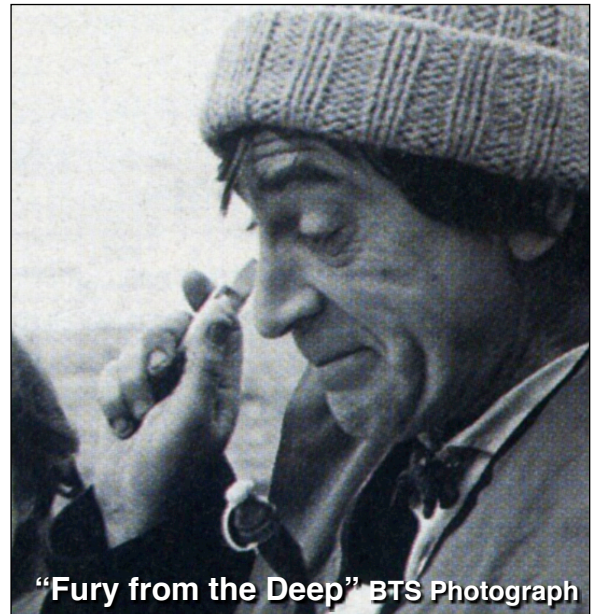


# The Second Doctor

## Season 5: "Fury from the Deep"



Acme City Whistle (like Screen Used)

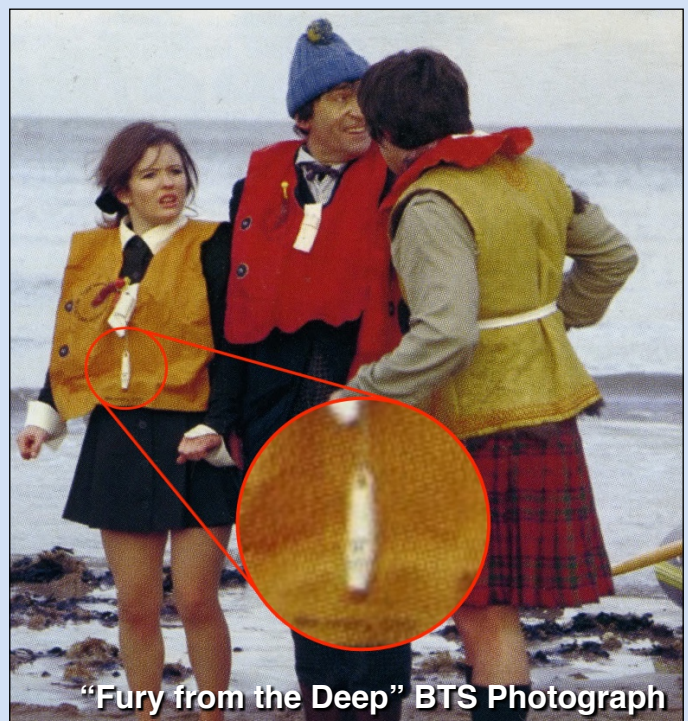


"Fury from the Deep" BTS Photograph

The Second Doctor (Patrick Troughton) was the first to use the multi-functional tool known as the Sonic Screwdriver way back in the 1968 story "Fury from the Deep". For this story, the sonic prop was simply a life preserver whistle and because of that it is often overlooked by fans, but nonetheless, it's the prop that kicked off our fascination with the Sonic Screwdriver.

Although the first Sonic Screwdriver prop used in the show was a simple life preserver whistle, that was not the original intention. According to Richard Bignell (Editor for "Nothing at the End of the Lane" The Magazine of Doctor Who Research and Restoration), who had the chance to interview Peter Day (a Visual Effects Designer for "Fury from the Deep"), there was a Sonic Screwdriver prop made for the story, however Patrick Troughton had accidentally dropped it down one of the pipes used while filling the beach scene, due to his hands being cold. Because of this, they had to improvise a new prop, and as Frazer Hines (aka Jamie

McCrimmon) put it; 'they used a bit of bric-a-brac' from the life preserver worn by Deborah Watling (aka Victoria Waterfield).



"Fury from the Deep" BTS Photograph



The whistle can clearly be seen in Patrick's hands, and on Deborah's life preserver in behind the scenes photos, as well as a close up shot from surviving Episode 1 Tele-Snaps (photos of select frames taken from the actual episodes).

Thanks to the Tele-Snaps, behind the scenes photos, and the actor's/crew's memories we were lucky to discover this prop since the story itself is visually missing from the BBC Archives.



"Fury from the Deep" Episode 1 Tele-Snap

In April of 2016, Victor Pemberton had attended the Time Eddy convention in Wichita, Kansas. Here he was of course asked about the Sonic Screwdriver's first appearance and stated "it was nothing more than a battery light, and he opens the valve with it.". Assuming Victor hasn't mixed memories his memories with "The War Games" sonic, this tells us that the lost Fury prop would have had a lighted tip, possibly another penlight; but more on that later.



"Fury from the Deep" BTS Photograph

It was later theorized by Richard Bignell that the actual prop may have been recovered after they dismantled the pipeline at the end of the shoot. In this case, he postulated that the prop likely would have been disposed of after filming, seeing as how it was only meant to be a one off prop, and not a recurring item in the show. Of course it could also have appeared as something else entirely in the show as well.



There is a possibility that the actual prop was not only recovered, but also used in the final episode of "Fury from the Deep", as part of the Doctor's specially built device. That said, since the story no longer exists visually, and the script and audio doesn't explicitly state the sonic's use within the scene, this remains just a theory.



"Fury from the Deep" Episode 6



"Fury from the Deep" BTS Photograph

As a final Footnote to the "Fury from the Deep" Sonic Screwdriver prop, the picture to the left had lead many to believe that the actual prop used in the show, was just an old fashioned screwdriver, however this is clearly not the case given all the evidence to the contrary. It would seem more likely that the screwdriver in the picture was just simply that, a screwdriver that the Doctor used after he used the sonic to open the pipeline.



# The Second Doctor

## Season 6: "The Dominators"



The second Sonic Screwdriver prop was introduced, and only used in the Season 6 story "The Dominators" and unfortunately it is still unidentified. We believe it could have been a penlight or even just a piece of pipe since it is never seen lit and appears to have been hollow during the scene. For its one use in the story, the Doctor can be seen slotting the end-cap, with a pocket clip and handle onto the tube, to convert the Sonic Screwdriver into an advanced mini sonic blowtorch.

Unfortunately due to a lack of reference material we are uncertain if the handle was custom made or a found item, or even what the true color may have been. There is, however, a continuity error where the Sonic Screwdriver was seen in close up either without the handle attached or with it slid back far enough that Troughton's hand obscured it from view. Either way, this tells us that the handle was positionable.







"The Dominators"

It's interesting to note that when the Doctor starts to alter his Sonic Screwdriver Jamie states "How are you going to dig through there with your sonic screwdriver?" suggesting that he recognizes the device, even though this is this prop's first appearance. This is interesting because we know that the stories were all serialized and connected from the end of one story to the beginning of the other, which means that from the Sonic's introduction in "Fury from the Deep" to its second use here in "The Dominators" there were no breaks for adventures in between these two stories. So while the prop may have changed for the actors, it appears that for the characters the Dominators prop is meant to be the same one from "Fury from the Deep", story wise.

It's possible that the "The Dominators" sonic could have been the original prop that was made for "Fury from the Deep", but as for now that is a theory that time has yet to prove.



"The Dominators"



"The Dominators"



# The Second Doctor

## Season 6: "The War Games"

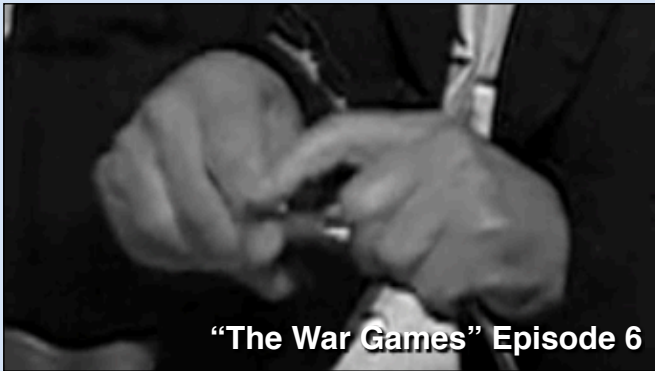


The Eveready Penlight - Photo © Lee Moone

The third and final Sonic Screwdriver prop used by Patrick Troughton's Doctor was introduced in Episode 3 of "The War Games". Our first proper look at this new prop was when the Doctor used it to convince a time-displaced German soldier that they were time travelers from the future. The Doctor twice used the Sonic Screwdriver to remove, and put back a screw from the handle of the soldier's revolver, so its initial use in this episode was just like "Fury from the Deep", as an actual screwdriver; albeit a futuristic one. What we can make out from these shots is that they had kept the base look of the "The Dominators" prop of the cylindrical metal tube, only this time it had a lighted tip, and no handle attached. In the scene the Doctor holds the prop with one hand, and activates the power switch on the back end with his other hand, which then illuminates the tip. The second time he uses it single handed. The activation switch is not visible in these shots.



"The War Games" Episode 3



**"The War Games" Episode 6**



**"The War Games" Episode 6**



**"The War Games" Episode 6**

Later, in Episode 6, Zoe suggested that the Doctor use his Sonic Screwdriver as a power source to remove a magnetic wall panel, so that they could see into the next room where Jamie was being held captive. This time we get a very clear look at the switch end of the prop which is conical in shape, has a pocket clip attached to the dark end-cap, and a white activation button. For this scene the Doctor had connected a couple wires to the pocket clip, and again held the prop with one hand, while activating the light with the other hand.

The same prop is used again in Episode 7, where the Doctor used it to reconfigure the timezone barrier equipment in Smythe's quarters. This time he grasps the sonic prop securely in one hand, and depresses the activation button with the thumb of the same hand.

Given that this time around the prop had a lot more screen time than the previous models, it was easy to see that "The War Games" prop was another found item; this time it was an unmodified slim penlight. Thankfully "The War Games" provided us with much more reference material that the previous stories, which went a long way towards identifying this prop.

This takes us to 2012 when Adam Sterczala discovered a 1960's penlight made by Eveready, which seemed to match the screen used prop's distinct features in many respects. In an attempt to validate the find, Lee Moone had asked Frazer Hines (Jamie McCrimmon) if he could remember the color of the end-cap on the filming prop, which Frazer recalled being blue. This recollection proved that Adam's find had us all on the right track, however there was just one issue; while the bulb end was perfect, the blue ribbed button and silver collar of the end-cap, just didn't line up with what we saw on screen.



**The Alternate Eveready Penlight (Not used in "The War Games")**



With very little reference material to work from, Frazer's memory was of course vital in the search for the screen matched penlight, however no further information would come to light about the actual model used, until January 2019, thanks again to Lee Moone. As it turned out, the actual screen used prop was indeed a penlight made by Eveready, only it was an earlier model than the one found by Adam. The real screen used prop differed from Adam's find in three noticeable ways; It had a slim white activation button surrounded by a simple blue collar in place of the ribbed metal one of the alternate penlight, and the metal body also had a duller finish than the alternate find. Interestingly, the penlight clip is stamped with the brand name 'Ever Ready' while the packaging states 'Eveready', which appears to be the difference between US and UK branches of the company.

The actual screen used penlight has now been identified as the Eveready Slim Penlight (Model no. 1980), version 1. For a more detailed overview of this amazing discovery, check out Lee Moone's blog, where he recounts his journey to find the screen accurate Eveready penlight:

<https://thezeroroomblog.blogspot.com/2019/01/the-2nd-doctors-sonic-screwdrivers.html>



**"The War Games" Episode 3 Restored Still by Clayton Hickman**

With three different props in three separate stories it seems that fans are spoiled for choice about which Troughton sonic is their personal favorite, however, despite their limited uses the, "The War Games" sonic appears to be the most well remembered. One can only guess as to the reason why, however given that it is the most represented version of the Sonic Screwdriver, it has arguably become the definitive design used by the Second Doctor.

As an interesting side note, while the alternate Eveready penlight discovered in 2012 had turned out not to be the correct model used in "The War Games", it did still have a Doctor Who connection as it was used by Jon Pertwee in "The Time Warrior"; although as a regular penlight, rather than as a Sonic Screwdriver.





# Thunderbirds Are GO & Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons



**"Thunderbirds Are GO"**

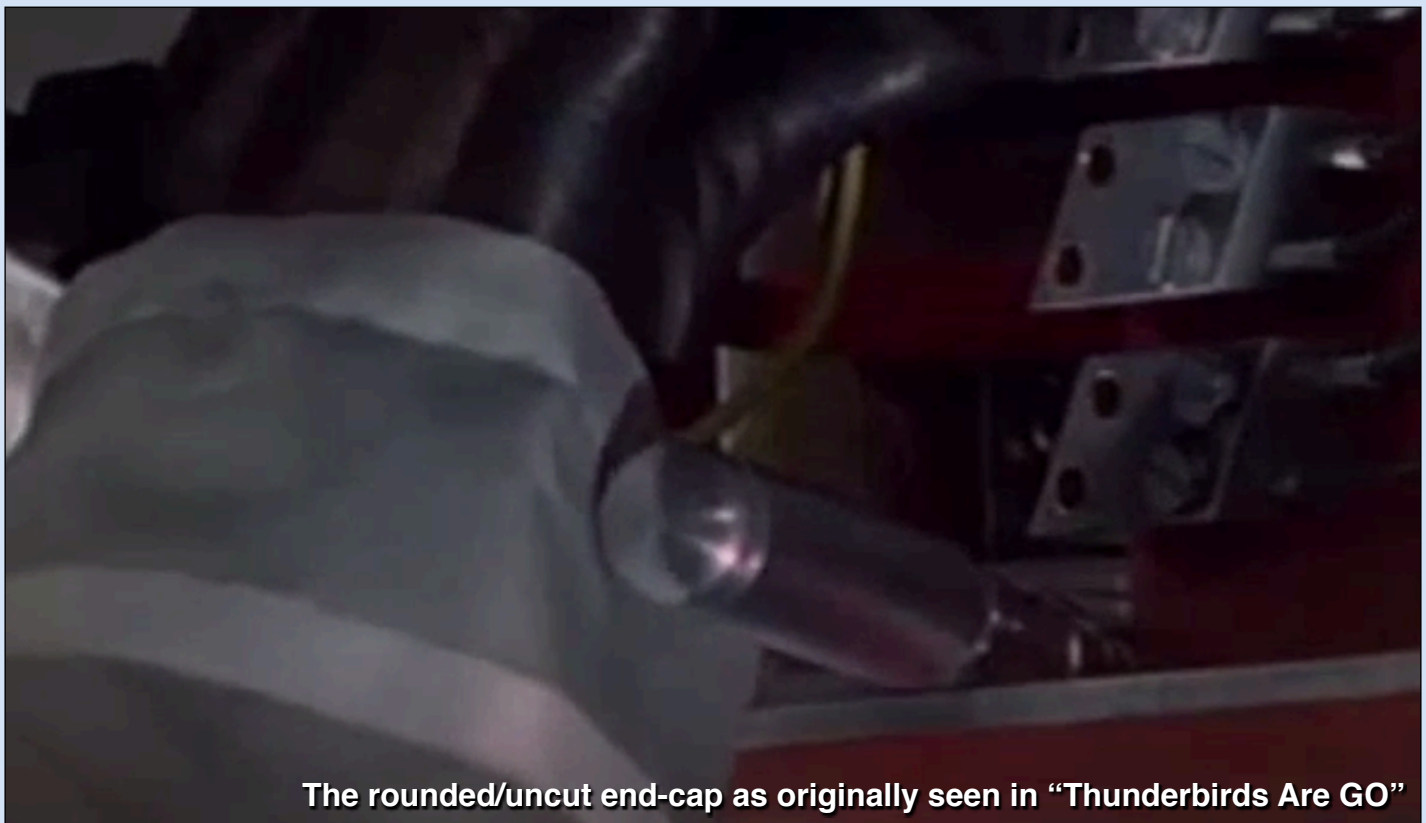
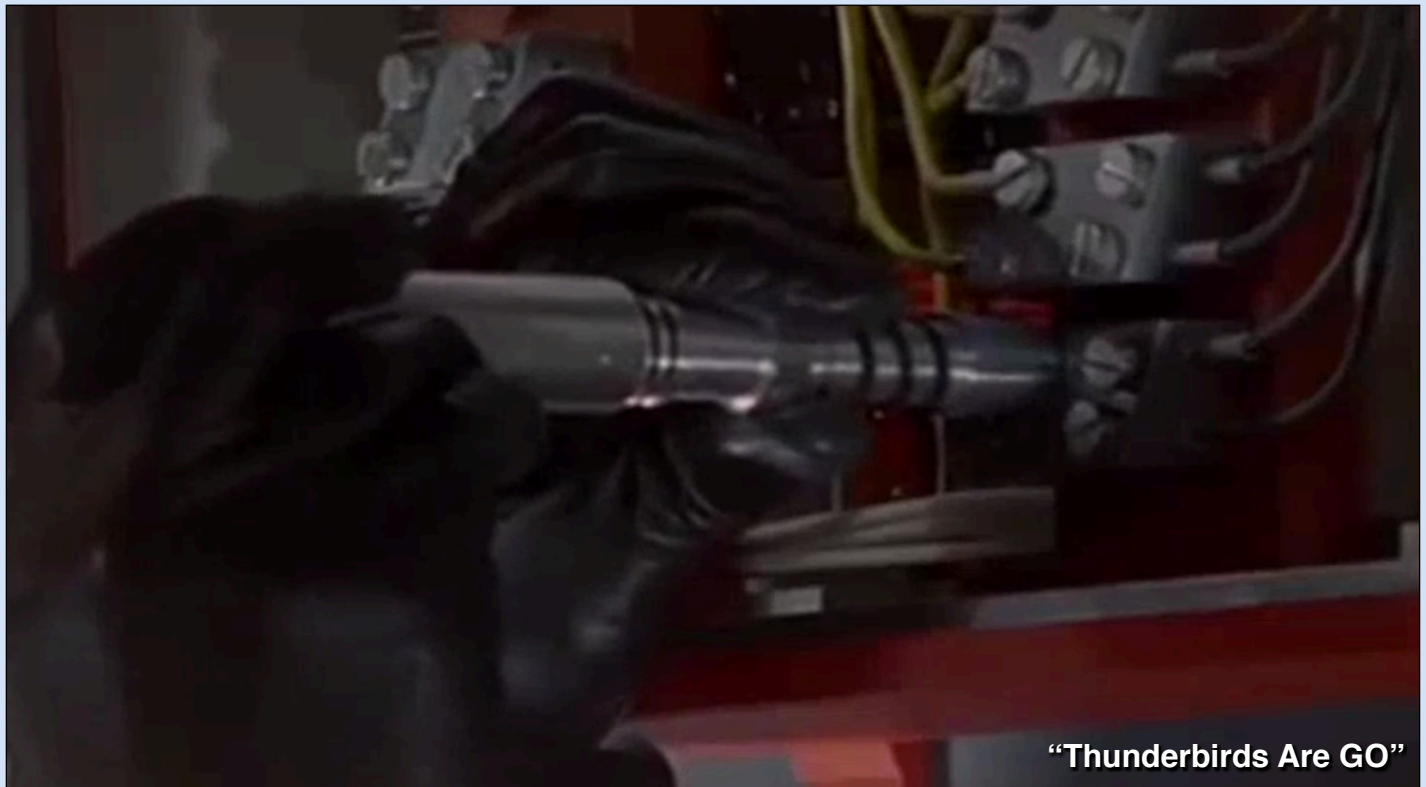
The history of Sonic Screwdriver prop used by the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Doctors actually starts a few years prior to its first use in Doctor Who, since the metal body of the Sonic Screwdriver was originally made for Gerry Anderson's 1966 puppet based science fiction film, "Thunderbirds Are GO", where it was used as a simple push/twist action tool. The top section of the prop even had the black spiral stripe around the neck, as seen on the Third Doctor's (Jon Pertwee) first Sonic Screwdriver.

The Sonic Screwdriver's Emitter Assembly - consisting of the red ring/halo, silver bullet, and the black neckpiece - appeared in another Gerry Anderson production in 1967 called "Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons". It was seen in the fourteenth episode of Season 1: "Model Spy", and used as Captain Blue's communicator. It is possible that this piece could have been used prior to 1967 as Gerry Anderson's films often reused props.



**Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons  
"Model Spy"**

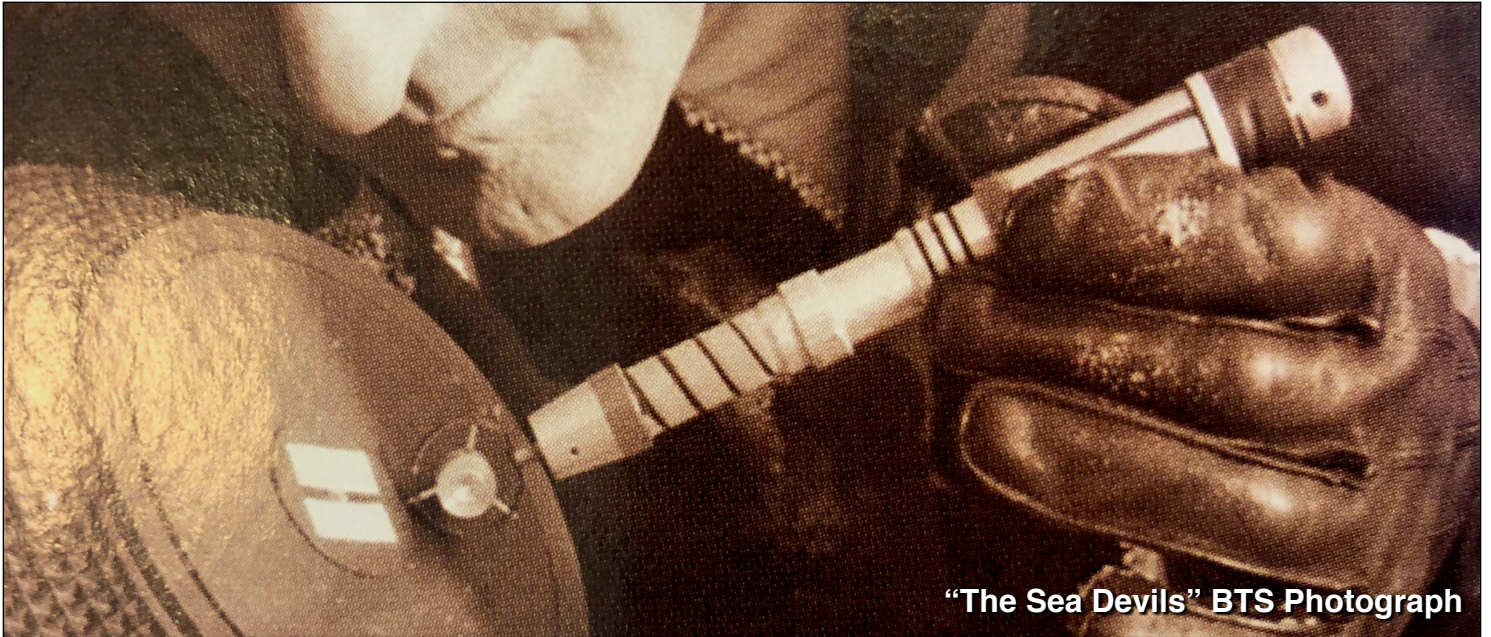
The Thunderbird's screwdriver tool, and the Captain Scarlet communicator, along with many others props, were later acquired by the BBC props department who had then repurposed these devices for use in Doctor Who.





# The Third Doctor

## Season 8-10



**"The Sea Devils" BTS Photograph**

Despite the Doctor mentioning that he couldn't find his Sonic Screwdriver in Episode 1 of "The Silurians" in Season 7, the Sonic Screwdriver wouldn't be seen again until Season 8. This new prop would arguably become the most quintessential Sonic Screwdriver prop in the show's long history - spanning three Doctor's eras - although it wasn't initially used as a Sonic Screwdriver. Nor was it used by the Doctor.

After the BBC Props Department acquired some of the Gerry Anderson props, they began using them in Doctor Who. One of the most recognizable uses was of course the mechanical screwdriver from "Thunderbirds Are GO", which was slightly redressed for its first use in Doctor Who by adding a belt clip to the end-piece and a pointed tip in the collar. This version of the prop was seen in Episode 3 of "Colony in Space", where Caldwell used it as a futuristic handcuff key while releasing Winton's bindings. Although it was a brief

scene, it demonstrates how last minute the Doctor Who props department could be, when you realize just how soon after the prop was introduced as the Sonic Screwdriver.



**"Colony in Space", Episode 3**

By Episode 5 of “Colony in Space”, the “Thunderbirds Are GO” prop appeared again, however this time it made its first appearance - albeit briefly - as the Sonic Screwdriver. For this short scene the prop had the “Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons” communicator attached as the Emitter Assembly, and was redressed much more colorfully than its appearance just two episodes prior.

Since the scene in “Colony in Space” was so brief, the first proper look at the new Sonic Screwdriver prop came in Season 9’s “The Sea Devils”. Here all of the alterations made for “Colony in Space” could more clearly be seen. Aside from combining the two Gerry Anderson props together into one, the body itself was altered in a few ways; the round end cap had a hole drilled into it, presumably for where the handle was attached in Episode 3. The handle either had the mat metallic sleeve removed or was replaced altogether, either way an open slot was now present in the handle. The body was then dressed with the now classic Jon Pertwee look of a yellow neck with a black spiral, and black, red, and white tape detailing on the handle. This design lasted all the way through “Carnival of Monsters” in Season 10.



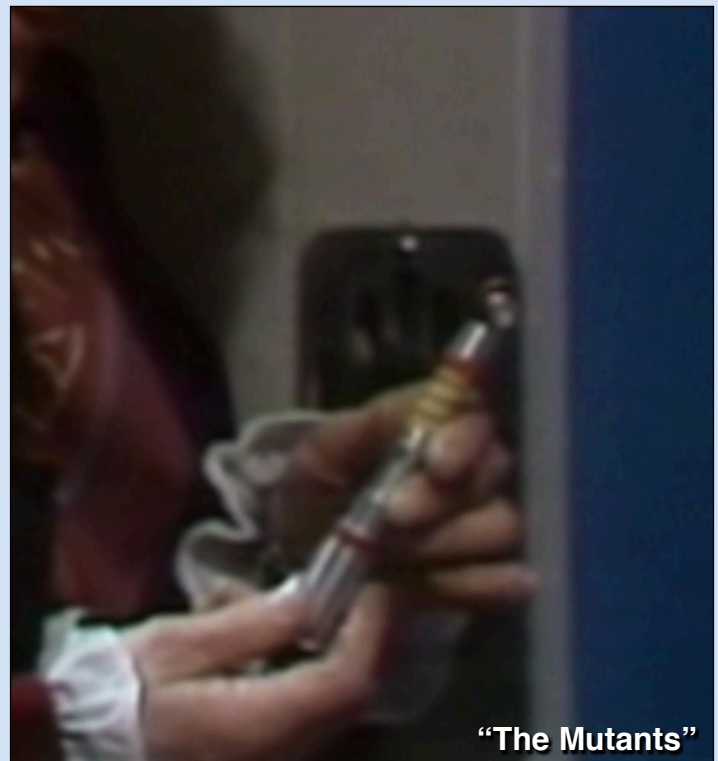
“Colony in Space”, Episode 5



“Colony in Space”, Episode 5



“The Sea Devils”



“The Mutants”



In both Episode 4 and a behind a scenes B&W photograph from Season 9's "The Sea Devils", we get a clear view of the "Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons" communicator in use as the Sonic's Emitter Assembly. Here it was used almost exactly as it appeared in the Gerry Anderson production, with two of the pins that hold the emitter bullet in place located on the bottom, and one singular pin on the the top, with all three pins protruded trough the top of the ring. However, by Episode 6 of "The Sea Devils", the emitter ring is finally placed in the more common setup of two pins on top and one on the bottom.

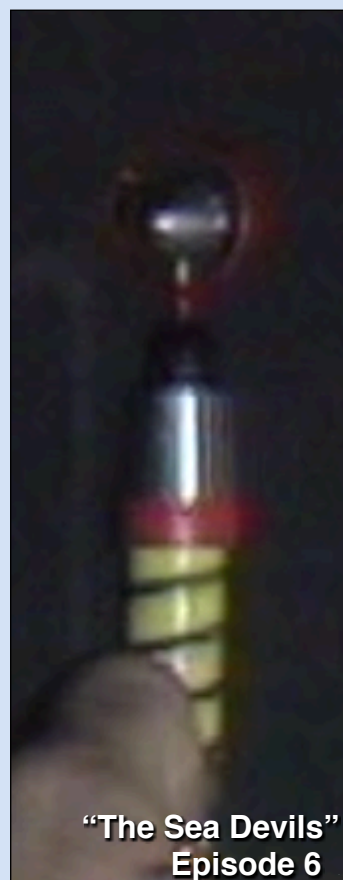
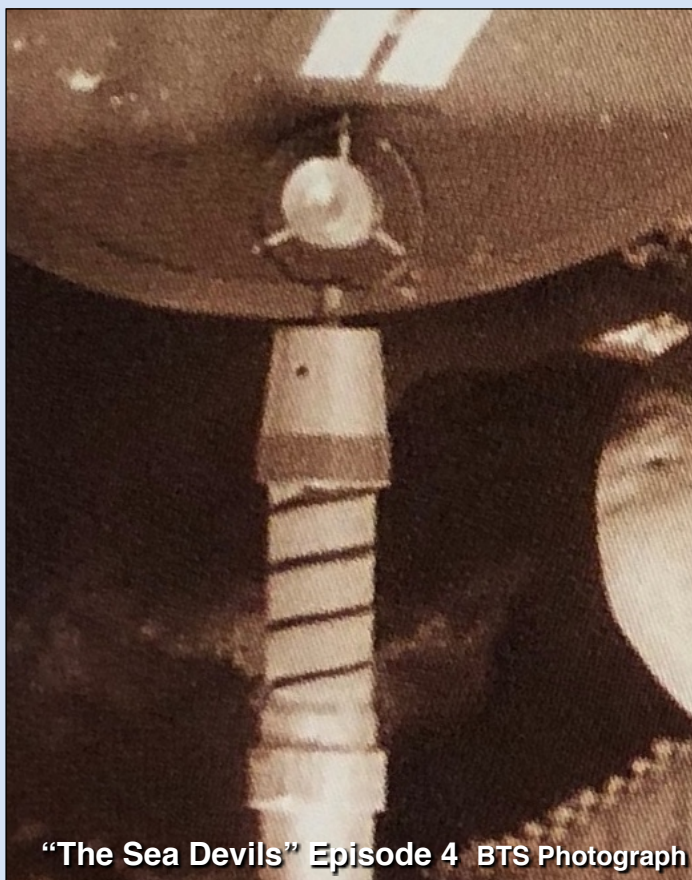
That said the halo and bullet could have been entirely remade for Episode 6, or a second version of the halo unit existed, since there appears to be a visible groove around the bullet on the Captain Scarlet prop, and the halo appears to have been flat on the bottom in the original Sea Devils photo. The flat bottom of the halo isn't seen again after the pins were set in the more common orientation for Episode 6 of "The Sea Devils", while the

bullet groove still seems present in Episode 6, but not in stories set after.

The differences of the Episode 6 halo unit are that the bullet pins were now level with the outside of the ring, and length of the neck pin was shortened, allowing the halo to meet the collar when at rest. The three bullet pins were also painted red, while the neck rod was either covered with a slim metal sleeve, or red tape.

One other change was made by the time of "Carnival of Mounters" for Season 10; the round end cap had a flat notch cut into it where the screw hole was placed for "The Sea Devils", with a grub screw set within the hole in the notch.

While the body wasn't of their own making, this version of the Sonic Screwdriver became the first truly unique design used in the show, and the prop itself would last eleven years in Doctor Who, with its final use being in Season 19, although it looked a bit different then.



# The Third Doctor

## Season 10-11



For Season 10's, "Frontier in Space", the prop was altered once again. This time the paint and tape applications were stripped, aside from the three black rings in the center, leaving the body its natural silver. The outside of the halo was painted burgundy, leaving the inside its natural brass coloring. A button magnet and a slotted screw were added to the back of the emitter bullet. The magnet was painted black, with unfinished ends, while the screw was painted burgundy, matching the Emitter Ring. The bullet pins were now unpainted, and the neck rod was slightly lengthened and no longer covered with tape or a sleeve.

Interestingly the Third Doctor also referred to the newly refinished prop as his "Ultrasonic Screwdriver". It is unknown whether or not this line was meant to address the changes, or if Jon Pertwee ad-libbed it on set. This new look remained unchanged all the way through "Planet of Spiders", Jon Pertwee's final story in Season 11.



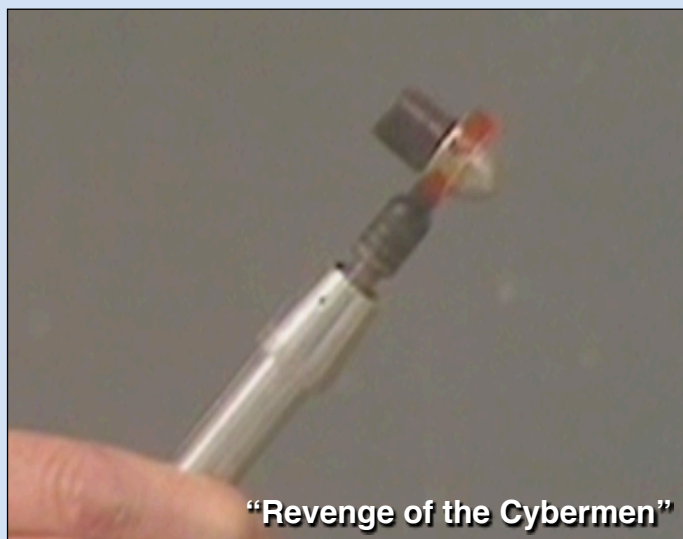


# The Fourth Doctor

## Season 12-18



For Season 12, there were a couple of alterations made to the Sonic Screwdriver prop since it's last use in "Planet of Spiders". For "Robot", Tom Baker's debut story as the Fourth Doctor, the Emitter Ring/Halo was now resting against the neck piece, and the black neck itself was now protruding out of the silver body when the collar was fully extended.



There were two other, less permanent, features of the Sonic Screwdriver prop seen in Season 12 which could also count as modifications. The first was seen in the story “Robot” where the entire Emitter Assembly - from the neck piece to the Emitter Ring - had fallen off in Tom’s pocket forcing him to use the device without the top while detonating land minds surrounding a bunker.



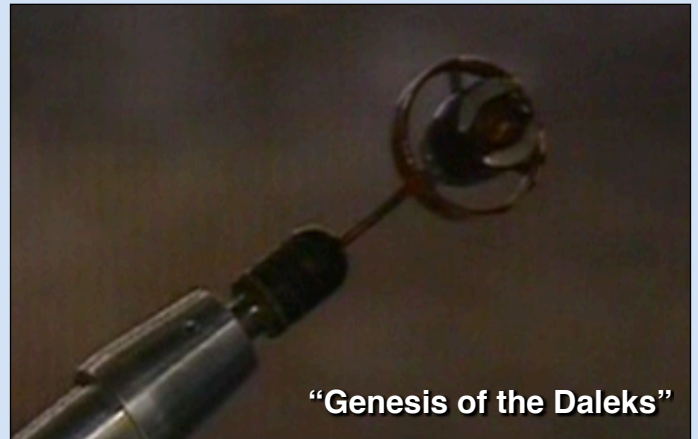
Later, while replacing the Emitter Assembly within the same scene, Tom reportedly ad-libbed the line “Turns into a miniature sonic lance, you see”, to save them from reshoots.





The other alteration was first seen in “Genesis of the Daleks” where the emitter head extended out from the neck piece on a long stem, which is later seen again in Season 14’s “The Hand of Fear”.

Aside from those two short lived changes, this version of the prop lasted nearly the whole of Tom Baker’s seven years in the role, however as each episode progressed the prop began to look more worn and distressed. As a result of this natural weathering, most of the burgundy paint had worn off the Emitter Ring, which allowed the natural light brass metal to show through. The Activation Ring - the raised silver thumb rest on the center of the body - also began to show signs of wear with the silver in that area chipping off and leaving behind a white residue. These white chips actually started to show as early as Season 11’s “The Monster of Peladon” and steadily got worse each year though Season 18.



**“Genesis of the Daleks”**



**“The Hand of Fear”**



**“The Android Invasion”**



**“Destiny of the Daleks”**

For Season 16's "The Pirate Planet" what appears to be a small silver washer was present on the prop between the Emitter Ring and the neck piece, however this "washer" isn't seen on the prop before or after this story, so why it was there and what happened to it is anybody's guess.



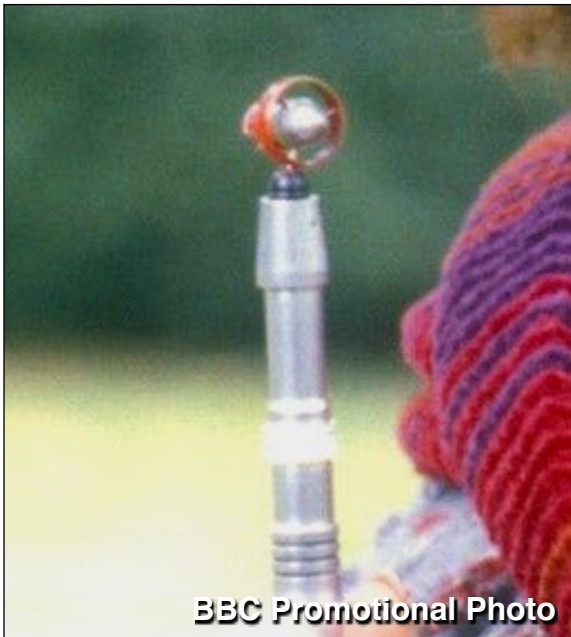
The last time the prop was used with this paint scheme was in Season 18's "The Leisure Hive" where the prop had clearly seen better days; its activation ring had only a few chips of silver left, and the nearly bare Emitter Ring was bent backwards at close to a 45 degree angle, while the bullet was also askew within the halo.





# The Fourth & Fifth Doctors

## Season 18-19



BBC Promotional Photo



"Four to Doomsday"

The Sonic Screwdriver prop was redressed one more time during Tom Baker's final season, first seen in the Season 18 story, "Full Circle", as the Doctor uses the sonic to unlock the entryway to the Starliner. The Emitter Ring and button magnet were repainted with a brighter red, including the ends of the magnet, with a silver - possibly brass - slotted screw in the magnet back. This time only the button magnet was painted, rather than a small portion of the emitter bullet as well.

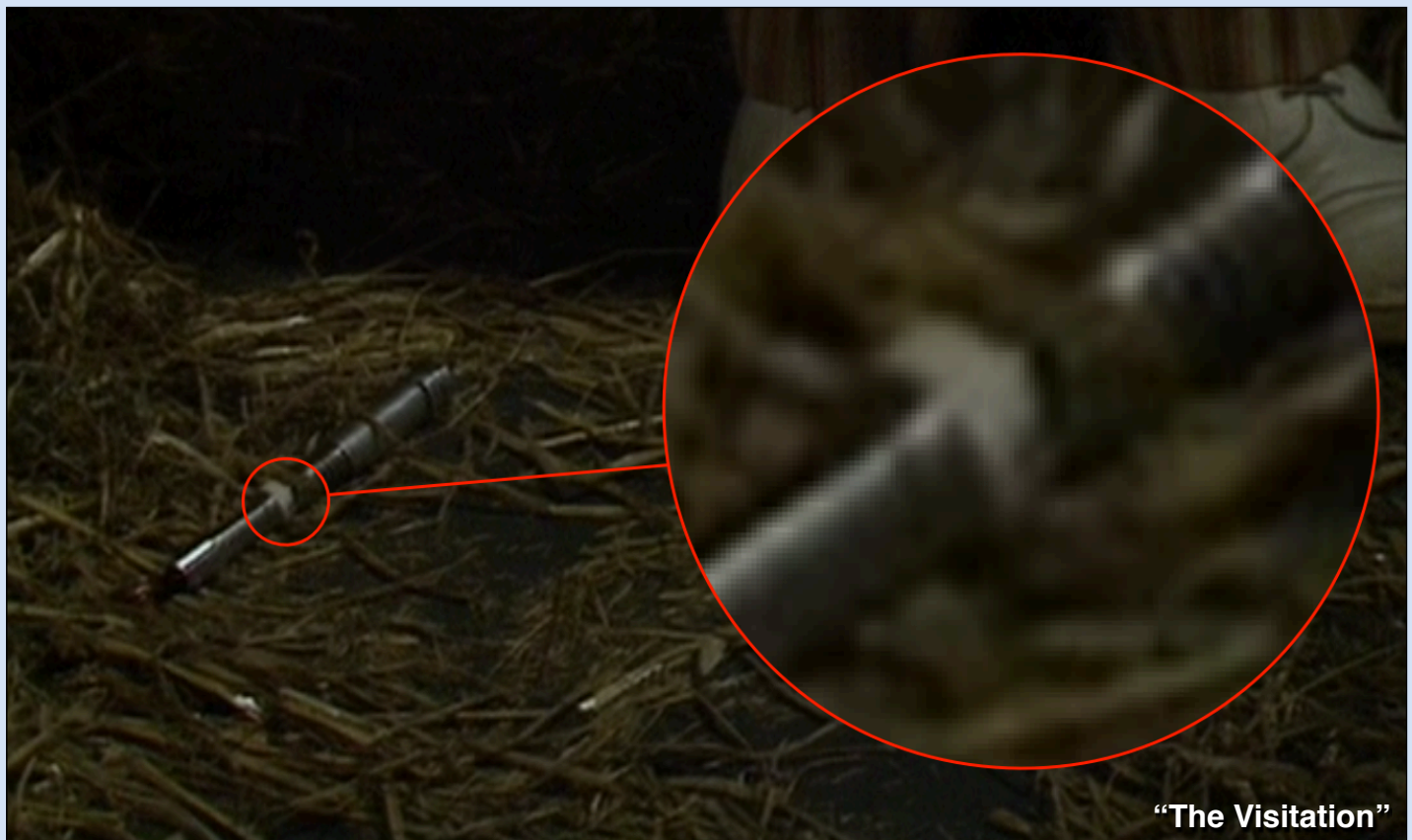


"Full Circle"



"Four to Doomsday"

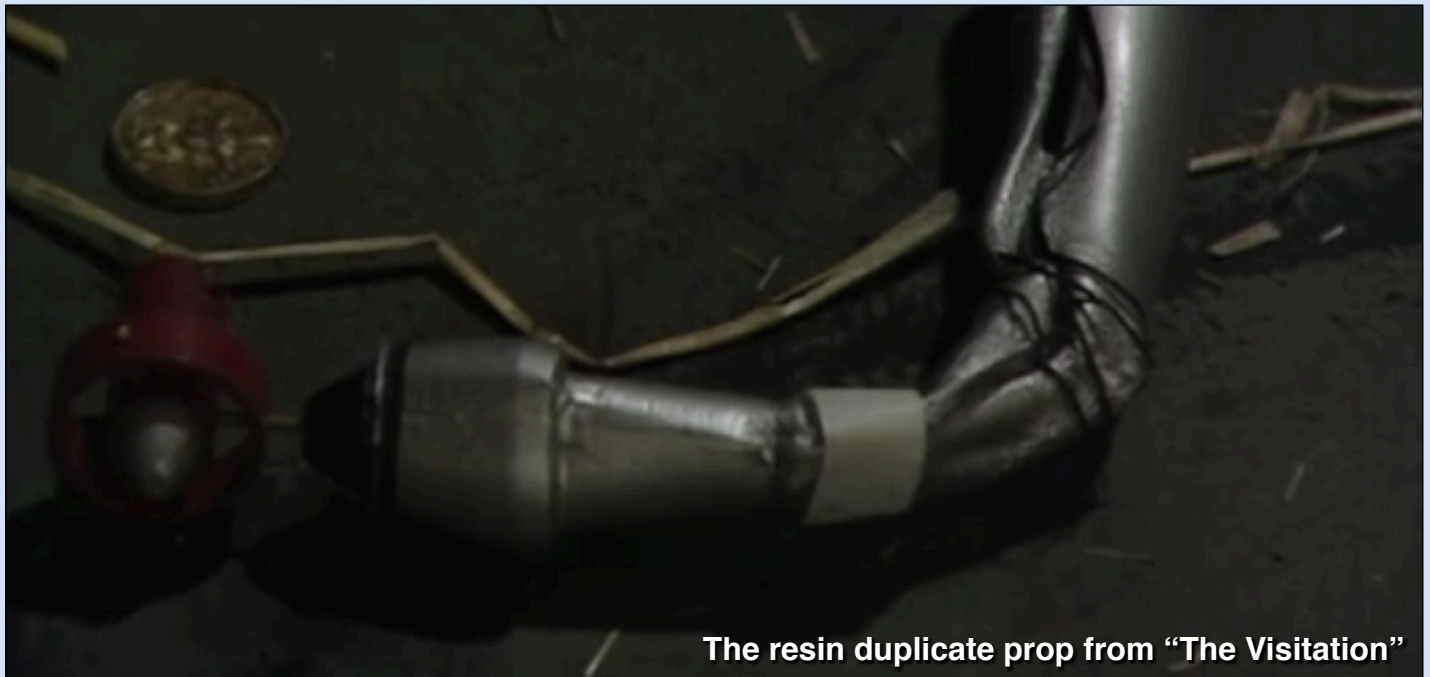
It also appears as though the Activation Ring had either been fully painted white to compensate for the silver flaking off over time, or that the chipping had just become severe enough that virtually none of it was left on the ring. Although by the time of Season 18's "The Keeper of Traken", at least one sliver of silver was still left on the band. This same silver chip also seems to appear in Season 19's "The Visitation".





**“Four to Doomsday”**

This Season 18 color scheme lasted up until the Sonic Screwdriver was written out of the show in the Fifth Doctor's (Peter Davison's) era, where it was destroyed by a Terileptil in Season 19's "The Visitation". This was also the last time that a Sonic Screwdriver was used in the Classic Series because the show's current producer, John Nathan-Turner, felt that it had become a "solve all" device. Of course the sonic destroyed in the scene was just a resin duplicate.

**The resin duplicate prop from “The Visitation”**

Despite various rumors, whatever happened to this classic prop after its final use in the show isn't entirely known. It's said to have gone missing from the BBC offices sometime in the 1980's and hasn't been seen since.

# The Seventh & Eighth Doctors

## The TV Movie



The TV Movie Production Photo

Fourteen years after its final use in the Classic Series, the Sonic Screwdriver was brought back for the 1996 TV Movie (TVM), thanks to the film's executive producer, and life long Doctor Who fan; Philip Segal. For the making of the film, the production turned to the Sci Fi catalog 800-Trekker as they sold replicas of the Classic Series Sonic Screwdriver and the TARDIS Key, both based on the designs which originally debuted in the Third Doctor's era. Although both items were based on the original props from the Classic Series, neither replica had exacting dimensions to their classic counterpart. Construction-wise, the 800-Trekker TARDIS key was made of pewter, while their Sonic Screwdriver was turned from

a solid piece of aluminum, and had no moving parts, although the emitter assembled was removable.

While the 800-Trekker TARDIS keys were used unaltered in the TV Movie, the Sonic Screwdrivers were a different story. We're told that at least two replica screwdrivers were bought for the production. One of those 800-Trekker sonics would only have cosmetic changes made to it; such as painting the emitter bullet red, and weathering the body to match the distressed tools from the newly made TARDIS toolkit, which itself was based on a classic design from the Fifth Doctor's era.



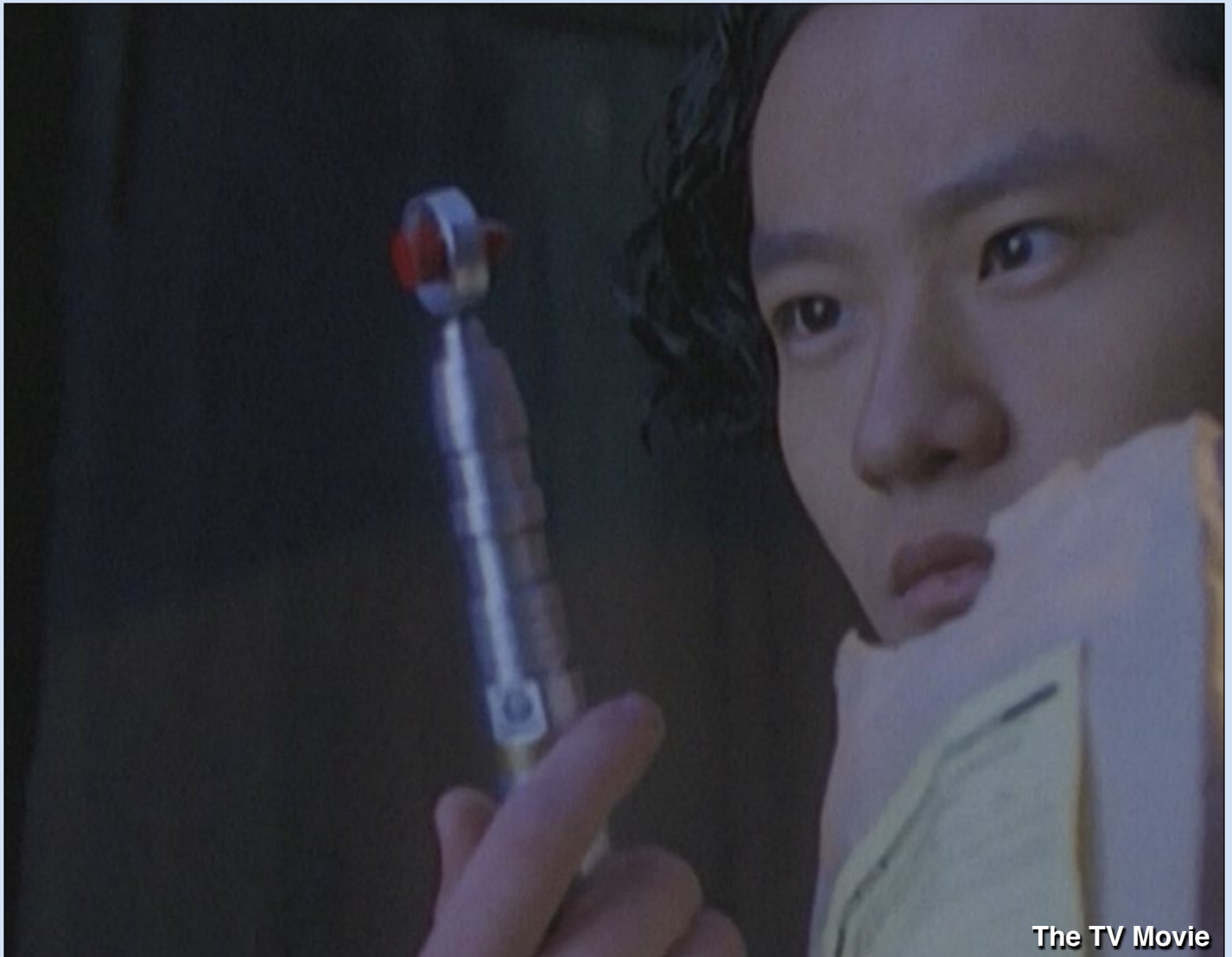
The 800-Trekker Replica



The second known 800-Trekker replica was used by a prop company, believed to be Iguana Design, in order to make a functional Sonic Screwdriver prop, which would both go on to be used in the film's production. Iguana Design had largely based their custom made prop on this replica, keeping many of its distinct dimensions, along with making a few changes and additions of their own, such as adding the unique extending functionality to the prop.

The most notable differences between the Iguana prop body and the 800-Trekker replica

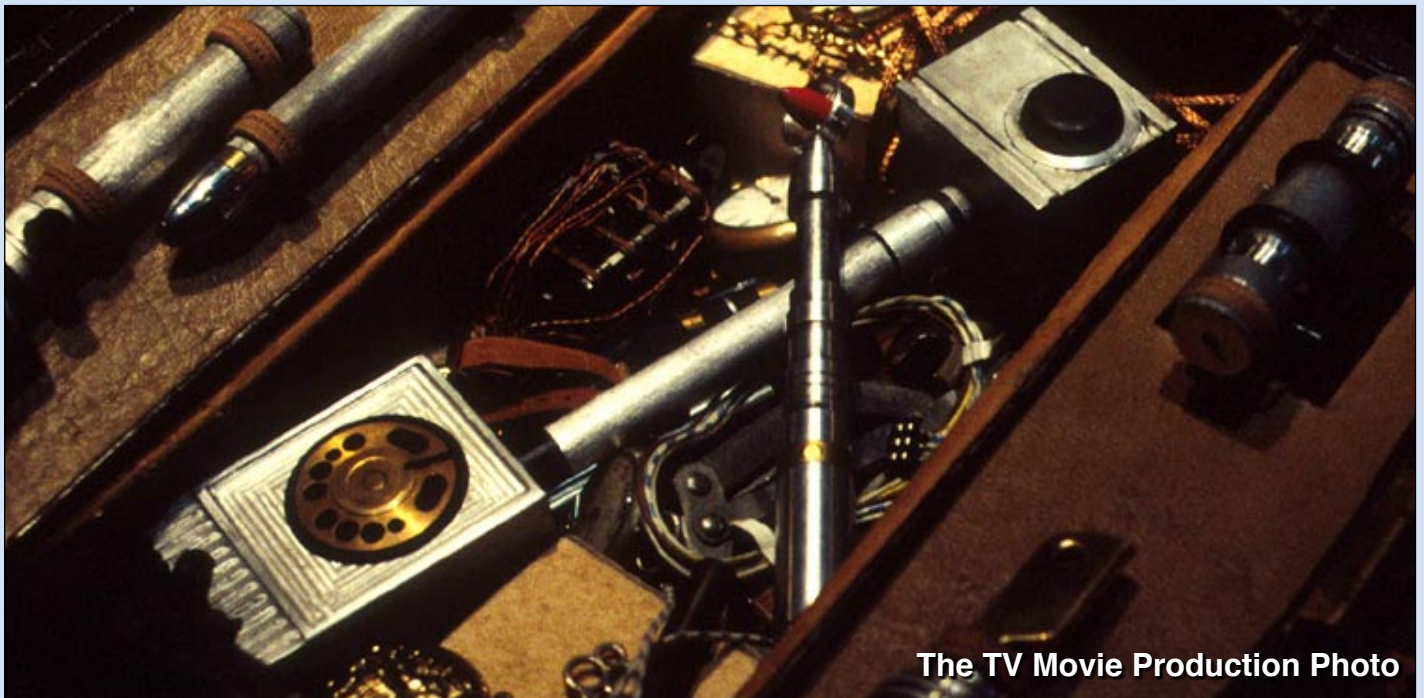
include a lower set activation ring, and a shorter top collar. The handle was also given a faux brass ring adornment, and of course, the newly made prop now featured the previously mentioned extending function that was button activated. This feature allowed the top collar section to recess into the activation ring when pressed down from the top of the prop, and would extend again with the press of a button, located within a flat section just above the brass ring. This button section is best viewed in the scene where Chang Lee is going through the Doctor's possessions in the alleyway.



The TV Movie

Unfortunately, the TV Movie was never given the chance to become a full series here in the States, which meant that Paul McGann's Eighth Doctor and the Iguana Designs' Sonic Screwdriver prop was only given the one outing together, and because of this, it would be quite some time before we would get a proper look at any of the replicas or the prop used for the production.

This brings us to 2012, when Philip Segal had seen the fan-restored original TVM TARDIS console, which used a replica of the Tardis Toolkit as a way to hide the new control electronics underneath the console. Philip was so impressed with the care put into this project that he gifted the original TVM TARDIS Toolkit - along with one of the Eye of Harmony posts - to the current owner of the screen used TARDIS console. Inside the toolkit was the 800-Trekker replica that had been weathered to match the other custom built tools. Although the toolkit sonic was altered to match the rest of the tools in the satchel, it did not appear on screen with the other tools. If it never made it into the film, then why make it match the kit in the first place? It is possible that this sonic may have been made as a pre-production test, a sort of 'proof of concept' piece for the Iguana Design made prop, or that it was possibly meant to have been used as a 'stunt' prop. Whatever the case, at least one of the TVM Sonic Screwdrivers was no longer shrouded in mystery.



**The TV Movie Production Photo**



**The production weathered 800-Trekker Replica**

In 2015, Philip Segal dropped some more facts about the TV Movie props via his Twitter page when he very kindly answered questions about the props through back and forth Twitter posts. According to Philip, the production did indeed purchase only two 800-Trekker Sonic Screwdriver replicas for the TV Movie. As previously stated, one became the toolkit version - now owned by a lucky fan - and the other would have gone to Iguana Design to make their working prop. Philip also claimed on his twitter page that the working production made prop was actually in his own private collection, however on January 23, 2021, Philip pointed fans to his Instagram account where he had posted a picture of a 1612 Fourth Doctor Sonic Screwdriver replica, which he claimed was the production used TVM prop. Clearly this is a case of mistaken memory, which is completely understandable, given that he worked on the TV Movie over 25 years ago!



Although the Sonic in Philip Segal's collection turned out to not be the real screen used prop, just five months earlier, on July 27th 2020, a listing for auction of the actual working Sonic Screwdriver prop from the TV Movie went up on [propstore.com](http://propstore.com). The auction would take place over August 26th-27th 2020. The listing was accompanied by eight pictures which filled in many blanks for this prop, and gave us our first truly up-close look at this elusive Sonic Screwdriver.

After twenty-four years of unseen adventures since the prop last appeared on our TV screens, we can now see many of the prop's finer details, including weathering on the sonic that isn't as easy to see on screen. When compared to screen caps from the film, the details and weathering match the screen used prop, as seen in the alleyway scene with Yee Jee Tso's Chang Lee.

These new photos revealed many other details, such as: The brass ring on the handle, which is actually a gold sticker, hides behind it what appears to be a grub screw construction - the function of which could be to simply keep the parts together, or possibly to act as a guide for the internals. The end-cap is also attached via two grub screws, one on the front and one on the back, with a small air release hole located just below the back grub screw. The groove that is formed between the end-cap and the handle is really two chamfered edges connecting to form a groove right at the join between end-cap and handle, and the end-cap itself has a milled indent in the base, which would have been necessary during the machining process. The rings in the center are varied heights, while the three grooves between them appear to be recessed V shaped cuts.



2020 Auction



2020 Auction



One small but noticeable difference between the emitter ring of the 800-Trekker replica and the filming prop is that there are no visible pin holes on the top of the ring on the filming prop.



The 800-Trekker Replica



2020 Auction

One of the key details that we finally get a proper look at is the button space on the back of the prop. At first glance it appeared that the sonic on auction was missing the activation button, however this is because the prop was only photographed in the extended position. When the prop was more closely examined in person, it was discovered that there is a white nylon activation button that travels up with the emitter section when extended, and then acts as a locking pin when the prop is in the collapsed position.



Filming Prop Sold at Auction 2020



This information helps us to understand the famous story of when the prop become jammed during a scene in the TARDIS console room where the Seventh Doctor, Sylvester McCoy, locked the Master's urn within a Gallifreyan chest. Since the nylon button travels with the collar section, it's plausible that it could have missed the locking hole and jammed the prop in the closed position, given how the prop collapses by hand. It does appear that this story may've been blown out of proportion, given all the access points to open the prop for repairs.



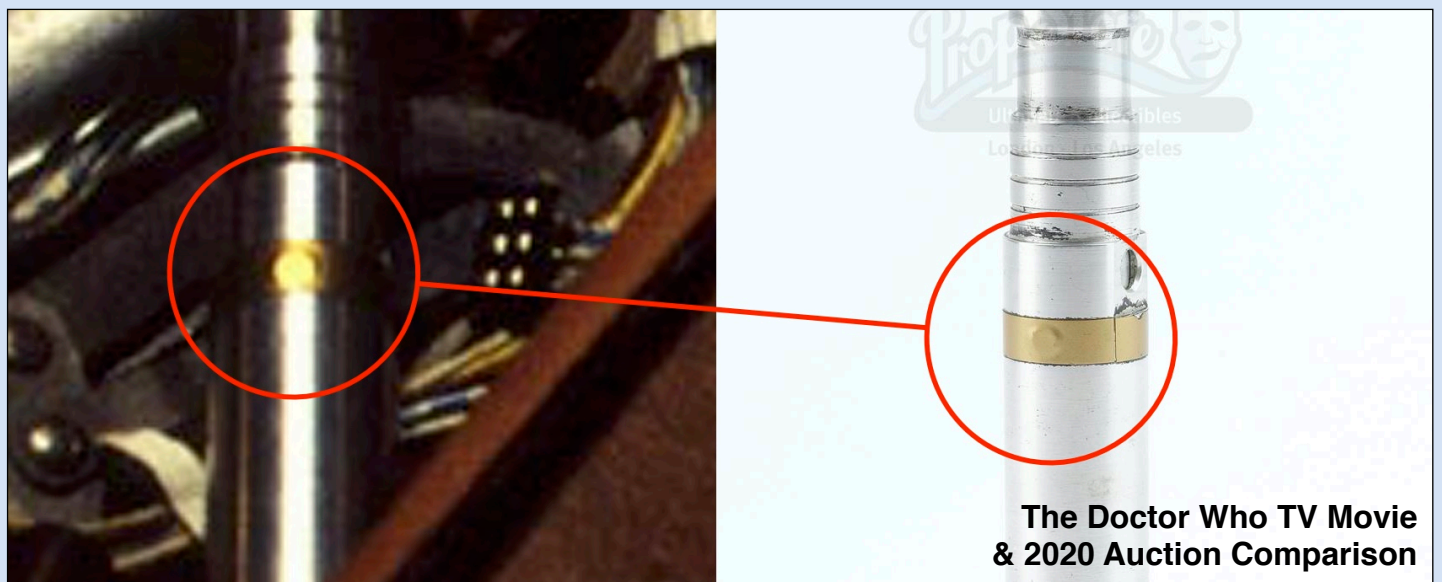
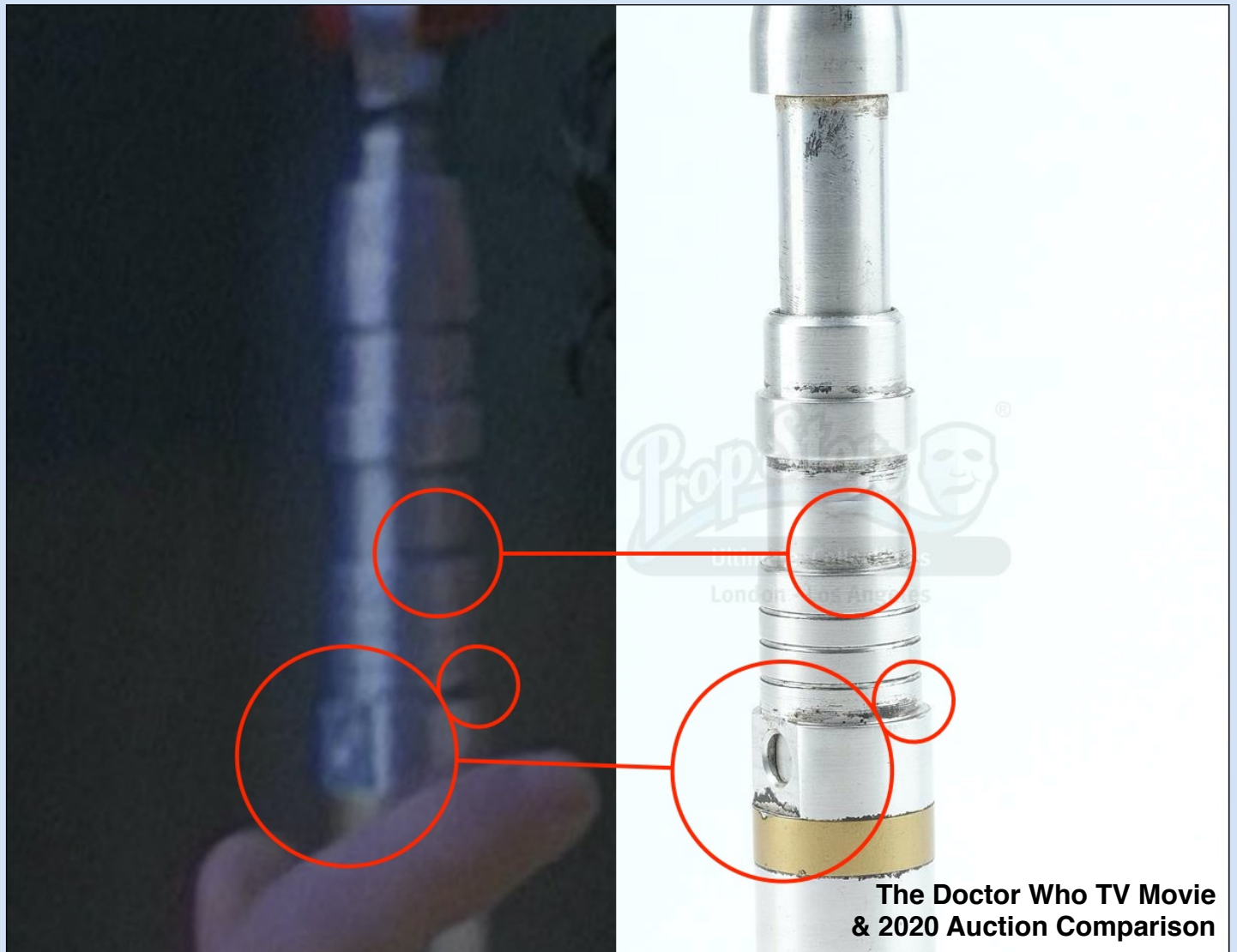
The Doctor Who TV Movie

The production team also chose to artificially blur a close-up shot of the sonic during this same scene because they felt that Sylvester, having used the flat back of the emitter, had used the wrong end of the Emitter Bullet while locking the case. Evidently they were unaware that both sides of the prop were functional in the Classic Series. Perhaps Sylvester knew more than he let on.



The Doctor Who TV Movie

Here are a couple of comparison pictures between the screen caps from the film, and the prop sold in auction in 2020.





# The Eighth Doctor

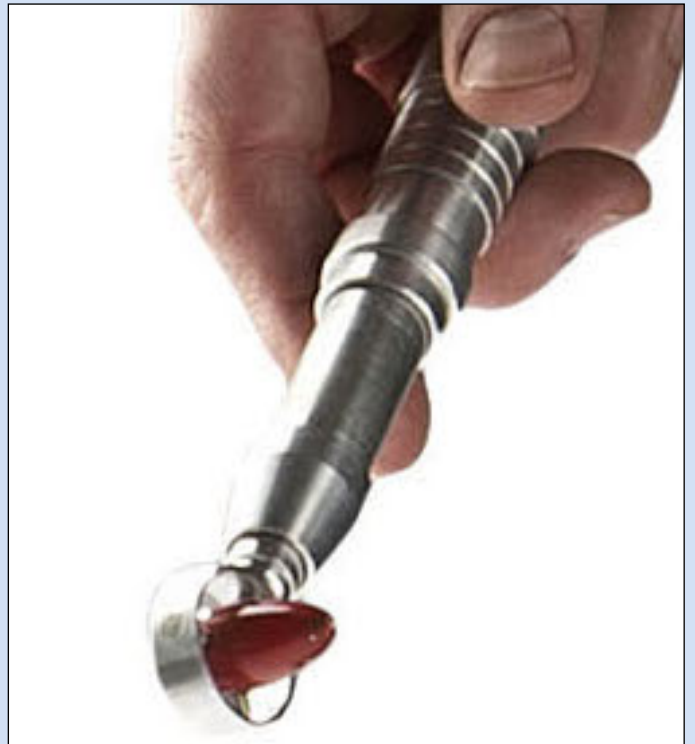
## Series 7: "The Night of the Doctor"



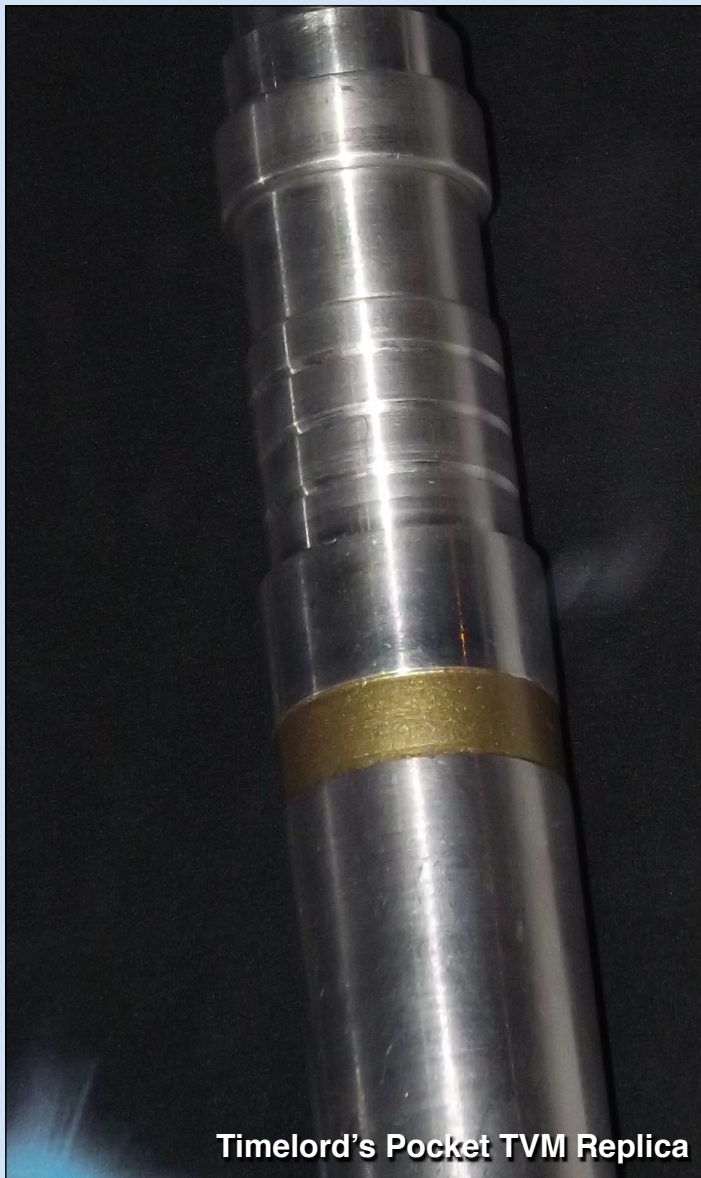
**"The Night of the Doctor" Photoshoot**

For the filming of the 50th Anniversary short story "The Night of the Doctor", the production team used a fan made replica of the TV Movie Sonic Screwdriver, made by 'Timelords Pocket' (TLP). The TLP replica had been on display at the Doctor Who Experience in Cardiff, which made it the ideal choice for the production team when needing a sonic prop for Paul McGann's return to the show.

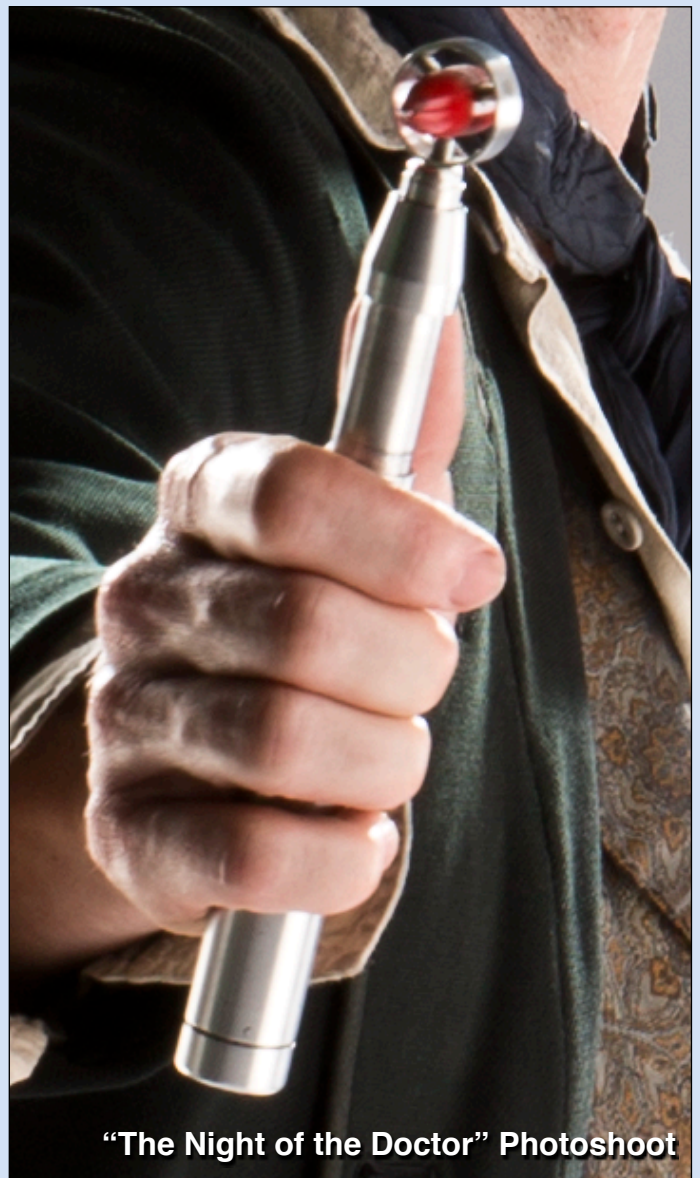
The TLP replica differed from the real TVM prop in various dimensions, and details, which of course makes this a new prop variation for Paul McGann's Doctor. The most notable differences are; the use of threaded bullet pins, a straight opening to the activation ring - where the collar recesses into the body - rather the angled top of the TVM prop, a speckled finish on the brass band, and the lack of the extension button above the brass ring; which of course means that this prop also extended in a different way than the TVM prop without the button release.



**"The Night of the Doctor" Photoshoot**



**Timelord's Pocket TVM Replica**



**"The Night of the Doctor" Photoshoot**



**Timelord's Pocket TVM Replica**

While this prop replica had been on display for years at the Doctor Who Experience it was at some point labeled as original, which lead many unsuspecting fans to believe that it was the actual TV Movie prop. Of course, once it had been used in "The Night of the Doctor", the Timelord's Pocket replica did become a screen used prop, however by then it was too late to properly educate the patrons who had attended to experience. After the the Doctor Who Experience closed in 2017, the Timelord's Pocket replica was presumably returned to its owner.



# The War Doctor

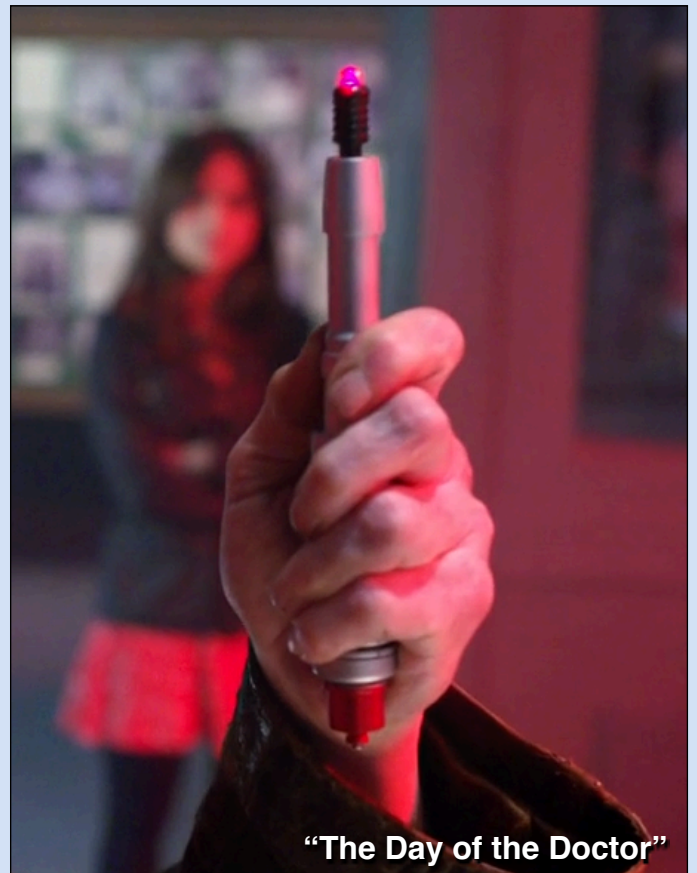
## Series 7



**“The Day of the Doctor” Photoshoot**

For the 50th Anniversary Special, “The Day of the Doctor”, not only had David Tennant returned to the role for the multi-Doctor story, but a new Doctor was created as well; this time played by John Hurt. And of course, as the new Series tends to do, a new Doctor meant a new Sonic Screwdriver. While John Hurt had briefly appeared in “The Name of the Doctor” prior to the 50th Anniversary special, the new sonic screwdriver did not make an appearance until “The Day of the Doctor”.

The new prop was an updated take on the iconic classic Sonic Screwdriver, with its illuminated tip and its fancy end cap; making it a blend of the Classic and New Series sonic designs. That said, given that John Hurt was cast very late, due the late decision by Christopher Eccleston to not appear in the anniversary special, the new prop was made in a bit of a rush. Unfortunately, rather than having Nick Robatto make a new metal prop, the props team used a toy as a quick fix.



**“The Day of the Doctor”**

John Hurt's sonic was made from an existing Fourth Doctor Sonic Screwdriver toy, made by Character Options (CO). The Emitter Ring/Bullet section was removed and the ribbed neck was cut open, rather jaggedly, and fitted with a red LED, making this sonic more of a natural progression from the last used sonic in the TVM to the Aztecs first seen in Series 1 of the New Series. Although, of course the Second Doctor also had a lighted tip.



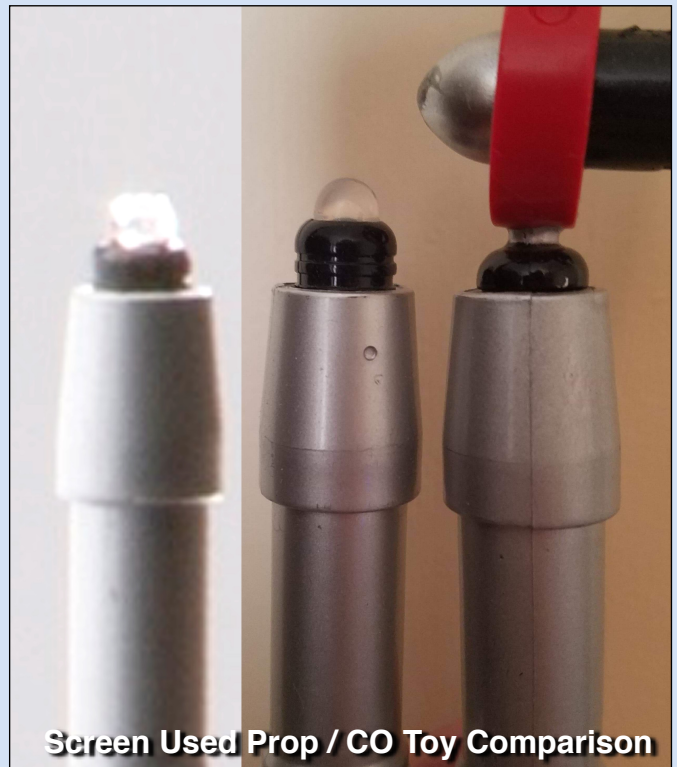
**Aluminum Differential Carrier Case**

The toy was also retrofitted with a red anodized aluminum end-cap, which appears to have been a Differential Carrier Case for an RC car, although an identical match has not yet been found. Interestingly, the prop can be seen with and without a silver nib poking out of the base of the end-cap, so either the piece was lost during filming, or it somehow floats inside the cap, only protruding when the sonic is held upright and disappearing when held upside down.



**"The Day of the Doctor"**

Shortly after the "The Day of the Doctor" aired, Character Options released their official toy of this Sonic Screwdriver, under the name "The Other Doctor's Sonic Screwdriver", to make it more kid friendly. While the toy was made using the same molds as Fourth Doctor toy, there are difference between the screen used prop and the official toy. For instance, the ribbed neck is cleaner cut around the bulb as it was molded to fit the red LED, rather than having been cut to fit like the screen used prop. The central rod was made wider to more comfortably fit the wiring needed for the LED, and it was a bit taller than the Fourth Doctor toy, which caused the black neckpiece to extend further out of the collar than it had on the filming prop. Although it's not easily seen on screen, the dot on the collar of the War Doctor's prop/Fourth Doctor toy was painted black, while on the Other Doctor toy, it was not. And lastly, for the red end-cap, a hard rubber mold was used to replicate the aluminum end piece, which of course makes sense for a child's toy. Despite these differences, the Character Options toy is the closest replica to the screen used War Doctor Sonic, simply due to the nature of its construction.



**Screen Used Prop / CO Toy Comparison**



# The Twelfth Doctor

## Series 10



In Series 10 a many of the past Sonic Screwdriver's were brought back for some cameo appearances, although of course, none of the Classic props were originals. All but one of these sonics could be seen in a wood container, sitting on the Doctor's desk at his St. Luke's University office in Bristol; starting with the Series opener "The Pilot". The container itself was a mid 19th century lignum vitae string pot.

The one sonic not seen in the pot was a Character Options (CO) Fifth Doctor toy, as used by Nardole in "The Pilot". For each episode of Series 10, the sonics in the pot alternated a lot. At various times some of the classic versions that could be seen were a mix of toys and fan made replicas, such as:

A basic penlight - or pen - to represent the one used by the Second Doctor; a CO Third Doctor toy - specifically the re-release with the darker Emitter Ring; a Third Doctor replica made by

RB Replicas - although this had been heavily modified; a Fourth Doctor CO toy; a Fourth Doctor replica made by Timelord's Pocket; and a TVM Seventh/Eighth Doctor replica made by RB Replicas.

