April 19, 1878

*This Date in Missouri Senate History*

On *This Date in Missouri Senate History*, the date was April 19, 1878, the day the first telephone exchange was established in Missouri.

It happened in St. Louis — 417 Olive St., to be more precise — at the Third National Bank Building. George Durant opened the first telephone exchange in our state, with a subscription costing $300 for three years.

Durant was a telegrapher during the Civil War and moved to St. Louis in 1874. The following year, he would put in place the telegraph that was used for fire calls. In later years, Durant started and ran the Bell Telephone Company.

Judge George Madill was among the first dozen subscribers to the first telephone exchange, but only if Durant would be able to add more law firms to the list.

In later years, many improvements would be made to the telephone, and the industry would be regulated by both state and federal agencies.

But, it all started on April 19, 1878, the date marking creation of the first telephone exchange in Missouri, on *This Date in Missouri Senate History*.

(Sources: *Kansas City Star*)