

TALKING MACHINES

Talking Machines Education Resource

Theme: Power

Film Title- Portable Steam Engines (Tumut)

About the Clip:

Synopsis: Meet the rare Brown & May Steam Portable Engine, 1889 which can be found at the Tumut Museum. Both this and the 1923 Steam Engine featured on this film provided power on the farm before the small stationary oil engine took over in the early 20th century. Portable engines were mounted on wheels and had to be moved from place to place by 3-4 horses. They were used for a variety of jobs on farms into the late 1950s.

Duration: 9.30 mins

Study Module:

Curriculum Focus: History – NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum

Year: 9 (Stage 5)

Strand: Historical knowledge and understanding; Historical inquiry and skills

Theme:

- Depth Study 1: Making a Better World? – The Industrial Revolution (1750 – 1914)
- Depth Study 2: Australia and Asia – Making a Nation

Key Concepts:

- Evidence; continuity and change; cause and effect; perspectives; significance

Curriculum Applicability:

- The technological innovations that led to the Industrial Revolution (**ACDSEH017**)
- The nature and significance of the Industrial Revolution and how it affected living and working conditions, including within Australia (**ACOKFH016**)
- The emergence and nature of significant economic, social and political ideas in the period, including nationalism (**ACOKFH019**)
- The experiences of men, women and children during the Industrial Revolution, and their changing way of life (**ACDSEH081**)
- The short and long-term impacts of the Industrial Revolution, including global changes in landscapes, transport and communication (**ACDSEH082**)
- Living and working conditions in Australia around the turn of the twentieth century (that is 1900) (**ACDSEH090**)
- The impact of World War I, with a particular emphasis on Australia including the changing role of women (**ACDSEH096**)

TALKING MACHINES

Historical Skills:

- **Chronology, terms and concepts**
 - Use chronological sequencing to demonstrate the relationship between events and developments in different periods and places (**ACHHS164**)
- **Analysis and use of sources**
 - Identify the origin, purpose and context of primary and secondary sources (**ACHHS169**)
 - Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of primary and secondary sources (**ACHHS171**)
- **Perspectives and interpretations**
 - Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (**ACHHS172**)
 - Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own) (**ACHHS173**)
- **Explanation and communication**
 - Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced (**ACHHS174**)

General capabilities:

- **Critical and Creative Thinking**
 - Developing questions about aspects of the past that require historical argument
 - Identify and clarify information and ideas
 - Organise and process information
- **Personal and Social Capability – Social Awareness:**
 - Appreciate diverse perspectives

Context/ Background Information:

This is a rare 16 hp steam portable engine made by the English manufacturers, Brown & May of North Wiltshire Foundry, Devizes, Wiltshire, in 1889. Portable engines are steam-powered units which provided a source of power on the farm before the small stationary oil engine took over from it in the early twentieth century. Portable engines were mounted on wheels and had to be moved from place to place by three or four horses as they were not self propelled. They were used for all types of jobs on the farm including running threshing machines, elevators, chaffcutters, feed grinders, sheep shearing stands, saw benches, well boring plants and pumps for irrigation. They were still in use in some parts of Australia as late as the 1950s.

Talking Machines: reviving Riverina rural technology collections with video testimonies, captures the histories and stories of generations of Australian men and women who farmed the Riverina, through the rusted metal frames and once sharp blades of dormant farm machinery they used.

TALKING MACHINES

The project creates a series of thematic trails across the Riverina and key objects have been selected to support the development of these themes which in turn speak to Australia's role in the industrial revolution- this is the focus of an educational resource. Australia's role in the industrial revolution and the impact of the revolution is little documented in Australian education resources- these films provide an access point for teachers on examples of the impact of the revolution upon rural Australian society. It should be noted that the full impact in Australian society occurred after the curriculum notes on the European based experience- thus date relating to the manufacture and use of some equipment may not align with those published in the curriculum.

Discussion Pointers:

- Why do people still love steam engines? Find and interview someone in your community who is passionate about steam power and find out why.
- How did this engine compare with horse power? Was it less labour intensive and why?
- Go to your museum/field days and find a local example of a machine that relied solely on steam. What significant point in time does this represent and what came next?

Suggested Classroom Activities:

- Go to your local museum and find different sources of power- how do these compare to a steam engine?
- Research old papers to investigate steam accidents in your town- how does the use of these engines compare with current safety regulations?
- Find a whistle and take it in turns to signal the starting, stopping, and emergency and danger signals for a steam engine. Why was this done?

More Information, Contact Details & Arrangements for Visits

The Tumut & District Historical Society Museum Centre is located at 63 Capper Street in Tumut, and is open every Saturday and Sunday afternoon from 1pm to 4pm or at other times by appointment.

For further information, please contact the Museum on (02) 6947 9899.

You can also find information on the web at:

<https://mgnsw.org.au/organisations/tumut-district-historical-society-museum/> or

<http://www.visittumut.com.au/wandering/museums.aspx>.