

TEACHERS EXHIBITION NOTES

BREWING AND PUBS

This exhibition tells the story of Tooth & Co, until recently NSW's major brewer.

In **Brewing and pubs** you can ...

- brew beer on a computer
- discover how wooden casks were made
- see Tooth's famous pub paintings.

Brewing and pubs has two major themes. They show:

- what it was like to work at the Kent and Waverley breweries
- some of the ways Tooth's and Resch's products were advertised and sold.

Most of the objects and images used in **Brewing and pubs** were donated by Tooth & Co.

Brewing families

For 150 years from 1835, Tooth & Co produced beer at the Kent Brewery on Broadway, about a kilometre from the Powerhouse.

In 1929 Tooth & Co took over Resch's Waverley Brewery on South Dowling Street, Redfern.

The 'Brewing families' display is about the people who owned and managed these breweries. Both Tooth's and Resch's were family businesses that grew into large public companies. Brewing was a precarious business in Australia during the last century: local brews had a poor reputation and competition was fierce. The breweries that survived into the 20th century were generally those with enough financial resources to cope with the ups and downs of the beer trade. The Tooth family, with interests in banking, agriculture and real estate, could afford to keep the Kent Brewery going, and to build the 'Swifts' mansion at Darling Point.

Today, the Kent Brewery is owned by Carlton and United Breweries, while the Waverley Brewery has been closed down.

This display features:

- a hand-coloured address presented by Tooth's staff to Robert Lucas Tooth to mark the change from family to public company in 1888
- a large background graphic of the mansion 'Swifts'
- a silver trowel used in 1876 to lay the foundation stone of 'Swifts'
- silver medallions won by Tooth's for their products in 1874
- personal diaries of Edmund Resch Jnr, recording a 1912 world tour of breweries.

Coopering — a lost art

Opposite the 'Brewing families' display, a section of the Kent Brewery coopers' shop is re-created, featuring a cooper 'driving' a hoop onto a cask.

Coopers made and repaired the wooden casks that beer was stored and transported in until the 1950s, when steel casks took over. Coopers also made many of the large vats used for brewing.

The tools in this display belonged to Bill Corfield, for many years a cooper at the Kent Brewery. Bill and his father, also a cooper, made many of these tools themselves. The tools are set out on the shelves in the order they would have been used to make a cask. You can follow the process on the labels and see a cooper in action on the video screen.

You can also hear Bill Corfield and Jack Rutledge, another former Tooth's cooper, talk about what it was like to work as a cooper. Coopering was a difficult and

physically demanding job, and coopers were proud of their trade.

Vanishing jobs — technological change

Next to the coopering display, in the central part of **Brewing and pubs**, you will find a series of displays on technological change and its effects on brewery work.

Beer was one of the first products to be industrially produced and commercially sold. Not surprisingly, breweries were leaders in technological change in the early years of the industrial revolution. The Boulton & Watt and Maudslay steam engines, displayed in other exhibitions in the Powerhouse, were early brewery engines.

Since those times, breweries have undergone periodic waves of technological change, often displacing long-established brewery trades. The Kent Brewery has been rebuilt and modernised several times since 1835.

'Brewing work' — The first of these displays features brewing implements no longer used at the Kent Brewery. Some of these implements are:

- wort samplers, used to take samples from the brewing vats
- brewing thermometers, one with a small cup around its base to collect samples
- a yeast skimmer, used to skim yeast from the top of the fermenting brew
- a copper bucket and yeast sieve, used to collect yeast from the vats.

Most of these implements were made by the Kent Brewery's coppersmiths. Modernisation of the brewery not only ended the jobs of the people who used these tools, but also ended the jobs of many of the people who made them.

'KB laboratory' — The next display presents brewery laboratory equipment. Imported brewing methods didn't work well in Australia's harsh climate, resulting in brews that were often unpalatable or even poisonous.

Only those breweries able to afford scientific expertise could produce consistently

drinkable brews in large quantities. Tooth's and Resch's were notable among these. Brewing began to depend less on intuition and judgment and more on laboratory testing and control. Australian brewers were among the first to isolate pure, stable yeast strains for brewing.

This display features:

- an Abbé refractometer, used to test the amount of sugar in the brew. Australian brewers have long used sugar in brewing, initially to speed fermentation
- a chondrometer, used to measure the volume and weight of barley.

'Maltings work' — Malted barley is the basic ingredient of beer. This display features tools used at Tooth's Mittagong Maltings before the malting process was mechanised during the 1950s.

At the maltings, barley is dampened and heated, encouraging the grains to sprout. It is then dried or roasted. Throughout this process, the barley is spread over vast malting floors and must be regularly turned over. The spades and rakes on display were used for this. The small brass sampler was used to cut the barley grains open and check their progress.

'Bundy clock' — This early bundy clock was made in the USA in the 1920s and began recording the arrivals and departures of Kent Brewery workers during the 1930s. Along with the various workplace signs displayed in the 'Vanishing jobs' section, the bundy emphasises the strict discipline of factory life.

Smoko and social life

Life at the brewery was not all hard work. In the centre of the next room are displayed a copper beer kettle and glasses. They were used to dispense beer three times a day at brewery smokos during the 1930s. Free beer has traditionally been a 'perk' of brewery work, although it was sometimes beer rejected by publicans and returned to the brewery.

Beside the beer kettle is a mock-up of the front of a 1930s brewery float, the focus of the 'Parades, picnics and clubs' display. Parades were once an important part of Australian life. Labour Day parades were Australia's major annual celebrations until the 1950s. The Tooth's float and the brewery band often won prizes in these and other parades. You can see some of their trophies and ribbons in the small display cases. Tooth & Co won prizes in events as varied as the Marrickville Relief Committee Procession of 1933 and the Rockdale Shopping Week Procession of 1928.

Other forms of brewery social life on display are the annual picnics and numerous brewery sporting clubs.

Selling and advertising beer

The centrepiece of **Brewing and pubs** is a display of pub paintings from the 1930s and 1940s. These advertising signs were unique to NSW pubs. Now that they have disappeared from pub walls, they're sought after as souvenirs of the era.

Pub paintings were painted by applying oil paint and gold leaf to the back of glass, using a complex transfer process. Many leading artists worked on pub paintings, including Henry Hanke, Walter Jardine and Alan Baker.

Pub paintings sought to sell beer by associating it with sport, health and cultural sophistication. They were part of a broader campaign to improve the image of beer and pubs.

The tiles on the wall come from the Hotel Rozelle, one of many pubs to be renovated or built during the 1930s. Tooth & Co owned hundreds of pubs at this time and set out to increase their attractiveness and effectiveness as advertising mediums. What are these days scorned as 'toilet tile' pubs were then the pride of the hotel trade.

Tooth hotel

In the next room, opposite the float, a bar counter and shelves are featured in 'The Tooth hotel' display. This unit adorned the saloon bar of the Ship Inn at Circular Quay

from 1936 to 1985. Like the paintings and tiles, it is typical of the 'new look' 1930s pub. The bar unit features bottles, glasses and advertising material from that period. Beside the bar unit a series of videos tells you more about the history of pub life.

Opposite the bar unit is a display of memorabilia of the temperance movement. A major reason Tooth's tried to improve the image of their pubs was the strength of the temperance movement by the 1930s. Six o'clock closing was in force in NSW from 1916 to 1955, while in 1928 a referendum on total prohibition was held. About 30% of voters supported prohibition.

Before leaving **Brewing and pubs**, we invite you to try your skill as head brewer at the Kent Brewery in about 1900. The computer interactive lets you 'brew' your own beer, and the tester will tell you how you went. Good luck!

FOCUS QUESTIONS

Select questions that will help your students interpret the exhibition. If necessary, adapt the questions to suit the abilities of the group. Answers can be found by looking at the objects, photographs, videos, labels and by using the interactive (hands-on) exhibits.

Look at the display on the work of the cooper and listen to the coopers talking about their work.

- How are casks made?
- How do you know it was hard work?
- How did coopers feel about their work? Do you know people today who have pride in their work? What do they do?
- What happened to the work of the cooper when steel casks were introduced? What other jobs can you think of that have changed because of new technology?

Look at the displays on brewery work and social life at the brewery.

- How has new technology changed work in breweries?

- Find the bundy clock. What was this used for? Do you know any worker today who 'clocks on and off'? If so, how and why is this done?
- What examples can you find of how the bosses 'looked after' the workers in the brewery?

Look at the pub pictorials and the display on temperance.

- How do the pub paintings try to persuade the viewer to buy Tooth's beer?
- What was the temperance movement? How did these people try to persuade people not to drink?

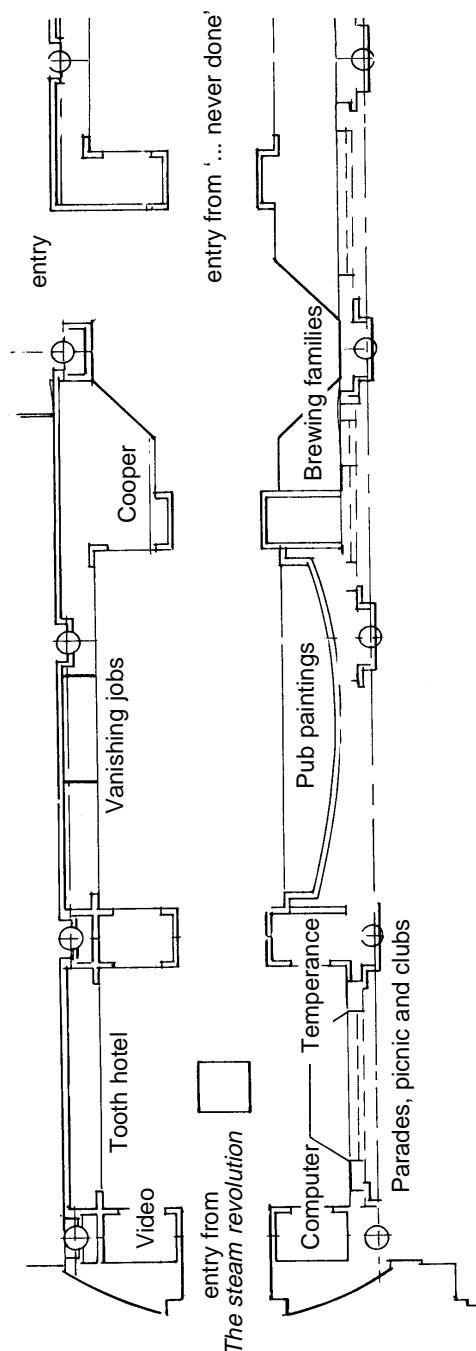
Audiovisual

- View the three programs that run continuously in the exhibition. What was the 'six o'clock swill'? Why did this happen? Could women always drink in public bars? In what ways have pubs changed? Why?

Computer interactive

- Try your hand at brewing beer on this computer interactive. What sort of beer did you make? Why?

**EXHIBITION
FLOORPLAN
Brewing and pubs,
level 3
Turbine House**



For details of other exhibitions and ways that students can visit the Powerhouse Museum, consult the current *Powerhouse teachers guide* or **call** (02) 9217 0222 or **fax** (02) 9217 0441 or **email** edserv@phm.gov.au

Available from the Powerhouse Shop

Brewing and pubs, a full-colour booklet about the exhibition.

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• *Ideas in Action* •

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