

AGRICULTURAL & INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

TEACHER'S EXHIBIT GUIDE



YORK COUNTY
HISTORY
— CENTER —

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AGRICULTURAL & INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

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TEACHERS ARE WELCOME TO VISIT THE HISTORY CENTER FOR FREE TO PLAN A FIELD TRIP!

We will make every effort to have a staff member meet with you to discuss your needs and plan your field trip. However, it is recommended that you make an appointment to meet with a member of our staff beforehand. If you arrive unannounced, they may not be able to meet with you.

We thank you for your cooperation!

INTRODUCTION

The Agricultural & Industrial Museum contains some of the most unique elements of York County's farming and factory history. Few people realize just how many different items were made in York at one time or another, and some are still being made here today!

The Museum is large – very large. So large that not everything can be seen in a typical one hour guided tour. Our galleries are divided by topic, not by timeline. This means that galleries can be viewed in any order, and there is no set “path” visitors are expected to follow. For educators, this means that tours can be customized to a certain extent, allowing students to focus on some particular aspects of both farming and industry, while bypassing other aspects.





“WORKERS OF YORK”

Sculpted by local artist Lorann Jacobs, “Workers of York” pays tribute to the men and women who worked tirelessly in York County’s industrial world. Workers are seen reaching for an eagle – a traditional sign of freedom, prosperity, and opportunity. The statue 11 feet high, made of 2,000 pounds of bronze, and dominates the courtyard of the Agricultural & Industrial Museum.

A TYPICAL TOUR

A “typical tour” of the Agricultural & Industrial Museum involves touring the museum’s “Transportation” wing, “Agriculture” wing, and the “Hall of Giants.” Details about these particular galleries may be found in the following pages. Other galleries in the museum include “Local Industry” and an exhibit on the York Plan – an innovative industrial production model introduced by York County factories during World War II. If there are specific galleries you would like your students to see, please be sure to tell our staff when you reserve your tour! We will work with you to ensure that your students see the exhibits you would most like them to see.



This white oak tree is on display in the lobby of the Agricultural & Industrial Museum. Known as “May’s Oak,” it was one of the oldest trees in York County. It began growing near Emigsville in 1704, shortly after the area was settled by Europeans. At the age of 293 years, the tree fell in a thunderstorm in 1997. A colored timeline on a section of the tree shows how big the tree was during various eras in York County history.

TRANSPORTATION

The “Transportation” gallery focuses on items that helped York County residents travel from place to place. Most all of the items on display are either made in York or have a York County story attached to them.

Of particular interest in this gallery is a 1937 Aeronca Model “K” airplane that was flown by York County resident Oscar Hostetter, his wife, and their baby daughter. They became the first people from York to fly across the United States to the west coast, landing in Spokane, Washington. Also on display are several models of Pullman cars - York’s premier car maker in the early 1900s - including a rare Pullman “Opera Car” designed exclusively for women. An 18th century covered wagon, a partially restored trolley, historic bicycles, and even a diesel-powered locomotive are all featured in the “Transportation” wing.



AGRICULTURE

This room focuses on York's farming and agriculture history. The room is dominated by Bradley's Grist Mill (right), a three story reconstructed grist mill that is one of the hallmarks of the Agricultural & Industrial Museum. During a tour, the water-powered grist mill is demonstrated, and students are led by their guide through all three floors of the mill, learning each step of the process of turning grain into flour! A fun part of the tour for students of all ages!

Also featured in the "Agriculture" wing is an example of an early steam engine. Though it resembles a train locomotive, the steam engine was used to power every piece of equipment a farmer might have, making it a vital piece of early farming technology.

A special exhibit on dairies and milk production (sponsored by Rutter's Dairy) is also in this gallery. Students are invited to visit the exhibit, and to meet (and milk) Annabell - the Agriculture & Industrial Museum's cow.



LOCAL INDUSTRY

At one time or another, many different items were manufactured in York. Some businesses moved in to the area, while others are homegrown, and native to York County. The “Local Industry” focus of the museum is divided into two separate galleries on two separate floors, and many of York County’s most well-known companies are featured in displays and exhibits.

Companies featured include:

- Pfaltzgraff
- Dentsply
- Stauffers
- York Wallpaper
- S. Morgan Smith
- Weaver Organ & Piano
- York Safe & Lock
- York Barbell Company
- York Water Company

Included in these galleries are interactive displays featuring 18th and 19th century printing presses, an exhibit showing what happens when a telephone call is placed, and an early 20th century ram pump, used to move water uphill using gravity alone.



THE YORK PLAN

During World War II, the American military was in great need of supplies to fight in both Europe and Japan. Industrialists in York decided to put aside their personal competitions and assist the federal government by forming a committee to oversee production of war materials. Government contracts were distributed to factories based to ensure that the best quality products could be made, and factories in York were soon producing everything from cannon shells and bullets to helmets, uniforms, and even shoe laces.

Nicknamed the “York Plan,” this process was soon repeated in cities throughout the United States, providing massive assistance to the U.S. military.



Companies that participated in the “York Plan” are described in this exhibit, along with the items they manufactured during World War II.

THE HALL OF GIANTS

As its name implies, some of the Agricultural & Industrial Museum's biggest artifacts are housed in the "Hall of Giants." The most striking piece in this room is a 72 ton A-frame ammonia compressor.

Constructed by the York Manufacturing Company in 1904, the compressor was once used to help make ice by forcing ammonia over containers of water. The ammonia would absorb heat surrounding the water tanks, forcing the water to turn to ice.

Above your head you'll notice a large crane that dates to 1895. The crane weights 7 ½ tons, and was used continuously until 1950.

Also in the "Hall of Giants" are two fire trucks, one dating to 1926, and another dating to 1947.

