

FASCINATING FIND

HORNSBY & RUSTON PORTABLE



Wood and coal powered steam engines dominated during the 1800s until the advent of oil engines around the turn of the century. In many rural areas steam power lived on due to the plentiful availability of firewood.

This portable steam engine was produced after the amalgamation of the Ruston and Hornsby companies in 1918, and is typical of what was used locally. The engine would weigh several ton, and be capable of producing about 10 horsepower.

During the latter part of its working life this one was used by to power the sawmill operated by Coops in Chapple Street, where it was fueled with sawmill waste. Unfortunately it was then stripped of its brass for scrap and the remains spent the last few decades outside the Golden Nugget Service Station at the Six Mile.

The boiler was donated to the museum by John Madill.