

FASCINATING FIND

ROCK DRILL



In the late 1800s many drilling machines were invented to expedite the mining of hard rock, and Simon Ingersoll developed a reliable machine with air cushioning that could be operated above ground directly off steam, or underground with compressed air. Such rock drills could drill more than fifteen times faster than men using hammer and drill, but the rock dust that was created plagued the health of miners.

Near the turn of the century George Leyner invented a drill known as a jackhammer. It flushed away rock dust with a jet of water forced through the hollow steel drill into the hole being bored, eliminating the problem of miner's phthisis caused by dust. In 1912 Leyner sold his patents to Ingersoll Rand.

This Leyner-Ingersoll drifter drill was mounted on a column and used for near horizontal boring. It was donated by Irv Runge, and is on display in the tank. There are other rock drills near the Thompson steam driven compressor.