

SIBIU COUNTY COUNCIL  
„ASTRA” NATIONAL MUSEUM COMPLEX SIBIU  
„ASTRA” MUSEUM OF  
TRADITIONAL FOLK CIVILIZATION SIBIU

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**„ASTRA”  
MUSEUM OF  
TRADITIONAL  
FOLK CIVILIZATION  
(Dumbrava Sibiului)  
Catalogue**



Publishing House „ASTRA MUSEUM”  
Sibiu, 2008

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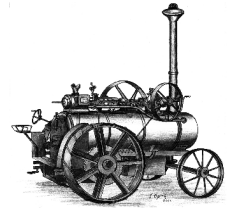


- 46 B **Threshing Machine** (Gura Râului, Sibiu County),  
 46 D **Activated by a steam engine** (Pâncota, Arad County)

The loco mobile (brought in 1995 from Pâncota, Arad County) was built in 1889 at the Royal Workshops of Budapest and was used to operate the cereal threshing machine. The device has an automatic propulsion system to drive to the area where threshing would take place, but because of its mass and its difficult maneuvering and slow motion, it was not used very often as a means of transportation.

This type of steam engine was used with high efficiency as a static engine and a generator of energy for another device attached to it. By moving the piston in a forward-backward motion inside a horizontal cylinder it generated the mechanic energy, which was then transmitted to a metallic wheel outside the cylinder, which, by means of a big transmission band, activated the threshing system of the machine. The threshing machine gradually replaced the *millennia old* method of threshing by hand.

In Greek antiquity, Heron of Alexandria (2nd century BC) demonstrated that gases expand and shrink when heated or, respectively, cooled. The first notable practical application took place in 1690 when scientist Denis Papin (1674-1712?) used steam condensation, under a piston inside a cylinder, to create a vacuum. The Brit, Thomas Newcomen (1663-1729),



*Loco mobile*



*Threshing machine*

in 1712 (after 15 years of experiments) built the first steam engine with a cylinder 48 centimeters in diameter, achieving 5.5 horsepower of energy.

The British engineer James Watt (1736-1819) realized that the enormous thermal losses resulting from increasing and decreasing the temperature of the cylinder at every movement of the piston (when the steam was taken in and then condensed). To remedy this, James Watt proposed, in 1765, to isolate the cylinder and cover the piston with steam in order to maintain a relatively constant temperature.

The steam engine continued to be diversified and improved. The simplest and most common type of steam engine, with one horizontal cylinder, was built on a large scale in the second half of the 19th century and this is the type of engine exhibited in the museum.

The steam engine was used on a large scale during the industrial revolution of 18th century in mining (water evacuation), the textile industry, transportation (steam locomotives) and agriculture (threshing machine) and was a powerful indicator of industrial and economic development.

By adding the loco mobile with the threshing machine (brought in the museum in 2005 from Gura Râului, Sibiu County) our institution succeeded in illustrating the entire typology and evolution of threshing, from manual (Feneș homestead), threshing with a horse driven threshing machine (Desești homestead) and on to the hydraulic threshing machine (Complex of peasant industries of Sârbi).

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