

BRUNEL IS BACK

Alive and In Person at your school! Or hosting your visit to the Museum!

A dynamic learning programme with actor-led workshops.

The Show

After the disastrous launch of his London ship, and a long convalescence, Mr Brunel has returned to re-live happier times and re-launch a successful career. He has been entertaining adults and children since 1992, and is now regularly at National and local Museums. He enjoys nothing better than a good public meeting...

The show lasts some 45 minutes and is participatory in nature. It is suitable for teaching and learning, not only across the curriculum in Science, History, Geography, Design and Technology but also throughout the Key Stages. It answers well National Curriculum requirements for History, for example, which recommends Isambard Kingdom Brunel as a topic for study of Victorian Britain at KS2. There are, of course, opportunities for a wealth of other cross-curricular studies.

Typically Mr Brunel begins with a story of his life and Victorian times, laced with anecdote about narrow escapes from danger. He describes how he helped his father build the first tunnel under a river anywhere in the world. He also describes building the railways, and the difficulties he had persuading people that their heads would not fall off when travelling at speed in tunnels. The same people believed steam ships could not cross the Atlantic, but Mr Brunel explains how it is done. All very technical, but apparently it's something to do with the size of your bottom...?



A veteran bridge builder, Mr Brunel describes the different properties of beam, arch, suspension and cantilever, and illustrates their relative strengths and weaknesses by getting children to build them. His previous bridges were built in brick, timber and iron, but a chronic shortage of funds means he is now making temporary structures out of people.

Brunel Museum: Education Pack

Finally, Mr Brunel makes an important point about inspirational engineering by performing a magic trick, with the help of the audience, and at the same time describing another less successful trick that nearly killed him, in 1843.

This show, with modifications, has been performed to, and with, young people of all ages, from KS2 to sixth form. It is an accessible study not only of engineering, but of Victorian life in all its grandeur and squalor. Did you know, for instance, that in his first project Mr Brunel had men working in raw sewage? But don't worry, we have told him to clean up his act...

Book visits to your school or the Brunel Museum

E-mail: education@brunel-museum.org.uk

Tel: 020 7231 3840

Press Notices

'Vivid re-creations of key moments in science. Studied the engineer in such depth that your disbelief quickly melts away' Godfrey Smith in THE SUNDAY TIMES

'...excellent' *'fascinating story'*
Victoria Neumark in TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

'My sincerest thanks for your most excellent performance' ROYAL INSTITUTION

'Our guests were greatly entertained' BRITISH RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Recent Public Appearances

Annual Conference Institute of Physics
Steam Museum Swindon, Grand Opening
The Royal Institution of Great Britain
Institution of Civil Engineers - guest speaker at annual dinner
Institution of Mechanical Engineers dinner aboard SS Great Britain
Celebratory dinner under the River Thames, Guest of Honour
Eurostar to Lille with Sir Alistair Morton
Millfield School, Kimbolton School, St Bede's, Bacons College et al
Re-opening Birmingham Snow Hill
Inauguration Chiltern Line, Marylebone to Birmingham
Newton Abbot, 150th Anniversary of Arrival Great Western Railway
National Museum of Science and Industry
London's Transport Museum
National Railway Museum York
British Empire & Commonwealth Museum, Bristol
Lambeth Archives
London Metropolitan Archives
Livesey Museum

The Educational Visit

The Brunel Engine House is a precious and remarkable resource for teaching and learning. The Education Team has delivered programmes at most of the major National Collections, and will discuss with you any specific requirements.

Key Stage 2

The Engine House has been successfully running actor-led workshops for primary schools for the past seven years, covering Victorians and Local History.

We have worked locally with the Pumphouse Educational Museum, and nationally with the London Museums Agency, to develop a successful module, through four sessions, for QCA 12: *How did life change in our locality in Victorian times?* (see below)

Visits are supported by a Teacher's Resource Pack for Key Stage 2, developed with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Key Stage 4

A visit to the Engine House supports learning across the curriculum in Science, History, Geography, Design and Technology but also throughout the Key Stages and for lifelong learning. We have established successful and ongoing programmes with City Technology Colleges looking at design technology and structures, and with other schools studying the works of the Brunels under the NC topic '*Britain 1750-1900*'. Resources examine how the expansion of trade and industrialisation affected the UK and the local area, and the effect of the Brunels' work in terms of the development of the Port of London, and in the pioneering of a new technology that placed Britain at the forefront of this area of engineering for the next 50 years.

Visits are supported by a Teacher's Resource Pack for Key Stage 4 students developed with a grant from Price Waterhouse.

In today's world of equal opportunity, it seems appropriate to remind students that Brunel's sister Sophie was nick-named 'Brunel in Petticoats' by the then Prime Minister, Lord North. Sophie showed greater promise and skill in engineering than her famous brother, and in different circumstances is likely to have had the greater career...