

CLOTHES THEY WORE, CLOTHES WE WEAR

HASS, Technologies

How has clothing, and our appreciation for it, changed over time?

- Compare clothing of the past to clothing today.
- Consider the scarcity and value of clothing in the past and the labour required to make and look after it.
- Experience sewing by hand.

ENGAGE

Let's think about our clothes!

- What items of clothing have you got on today?
- What material are those items made from? What qualities does this material have (eg. is it light? stretchy? waterproof?)
- What colours are your clothes?
- What sort of fastenings are there? What are these made from?

EXPLORE

Show students some examples of clothing from late 19th/early 20th century (included in this resource), and compare them to the clothing of today.

You can also show students a video of [how fashion changed over the past 100 years](#).

EXPLAIN

- The clothes worn by people in the past can tell us about the fashions that were once in place, how the different social levels were expressed (ie. how 'important' or rich people were), and the sorts of jobs they did.
- Clothing was made from natural fabrics like linen, cotton, wool or silk. Synthetic fibres, such as nylon or polyester, and fastenings like plastic buttons, velcro and zips were not used until the 20th century. (You can show students examples of different types of materials and discuss their properties).
- In the early days of the Swan River Colony, clothing, footwear and jewellery were scarce. This is because the materials (eg. textiles, buttons and other fastenings, precious stones) and the tools to make them needed to come from Europe or the other side of Australia by boat – a journey that could take up to several months.
- Clothing was repaired and completely worn out before it was thrown away – and even then, bits of it would have been recycled.
- Women's clothing tended to be more expensive, so it tended to be better looked after, survived longer and is more likely to be a part of museum collections today.

EXTEND

Using the photos included in this resource as a reference, students can make a sketch of clothing from the past, labelling some of its features. Discuss the practicality of some of those features, in the context of Avon Valley climate.

Talk about how clothing is made today and watch a [video of a modern clothing factory in Australia](#).

Explain that in the past, clothes were often made at home and/or sewn by hand. Show students a close up photo of the inside of a garment and note the stitching.

Enable students to have a go at some simple sewing projects, eg:

- <https://makeit-loveit.com/teaching-kids-to-hand-sew>
- <https://www.kids-sewing-projects.com/pre-beginner-sewing-lessons.html>
- <https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/235805730465693586/>



EVALUATE AND REFLECT

In the past, it was important for people (mainly women) to know how to sew. On a scale of 0 – 10, how important do you think this skill is today?

Clothing today is more easily replacable than in the past, but it still costs money and resources to make and buy.

- What are some ways we can look after our clothing?
- What can we do with clothes once we have outgrown them or after they are damaged and worn out?

WANT TO DO MORE?

- How often do we need to wash our clothes?
- How do we wash our clothes today?

Get students to role play doing the washing today: ie. take items from a washing basket, put them into a washing machine, add washing powder, turn the washing machine on. Time students to see how long the process takes.

Then, see how long it takes to do the washing by hand. Students can go and 'collect water from a well' (a tap outside), fill up a tub, wash the clothes by hand, rinse two or three times (getting fresh water each time). Time them for how long this process takes, and compare how much labour time is saved by using a washing machine.

You can show students a photo of a wash house from the past, to serve as a comparison for a modern-day laundry.



USEFUL RESOURCE

George Fletcher Moore was one of the early European settlers to the Swan River Colony and among the first Europeans to explore the area around Toodyay. He kept extensive diaries of his life in the Colony, published under the title of [Diary of ten years eventful life of an early settler in Western Australia](#). Try searching for the words 'shoes', 'shirt' or 'clothes' in the document, to see George's thoughts and comments about those items.



Toodyay gymnastics group, 1924.
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2015-9



Teacher and pupils at Coondle Provisional School, c.1897.
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2001-1220



Toodyay football team, 1905.
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2015-9



Toodyay tennis club, 1912
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2001-1220



Toodyay Club social group at a bowling green, Stirling Terrace, 1912.

Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2001.1111



Portrait of Mr Henry James (1841-1913) and Mrs Sarah Hannah (nee Mead) (1846-1907) Twine. The Twines are an old Toodyay family, and their youngest son Frank kept diaries about life on the farm. Both are in formal day dress of that day, c.1880.

Shire of Toodyay Local history collection 2001.1282



'Modesty front' (bodice insert), c. 1870.
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2003-32



Men's underwear, c.1920-1930
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2003-16



Newcastle Railway Station 1897.

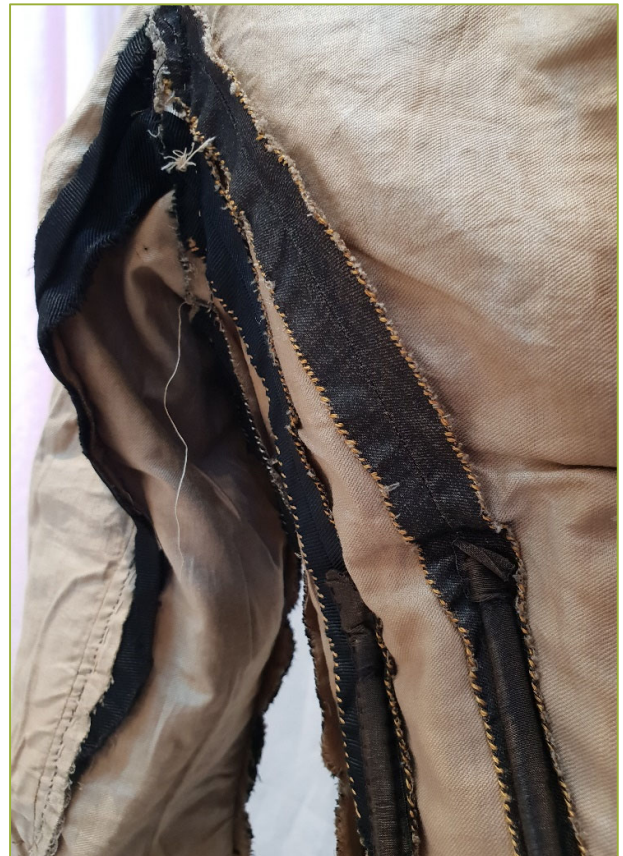


Newcastle Bridge over Avon River, Toodyay, with residents and policeman.



Street scene, showing the reception for Lord John Forrest outside of Newcastle Council Chambers, Stirling Terrace. C. 1908

Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2007.23



Inside and outside of a ladies jacket.
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2003.40 a



Farmyard at Syred's cottage, Bejoording. Two buildings at rear of photo are the wash house and storage shed. Two gum trees on either side of wash house.

Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2001.1233