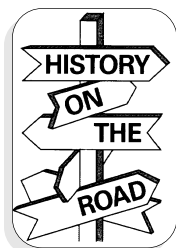


HISTORY ON THE ROAD

MUSEUM KEEPS LOG OF FORESTRY IN TEXAS

Adapted from an article by Elaine Jackson



Although most people automatically link oil and cattle to the Texas economy, trees also were integral to the building of the state. During the last decade of the 19th

century, Texas forests generated more money than any other industry. Today, more than 5,000 products are made from wood or its byproducts, and wood products are the state's third-ranking agricultural commodity, even though the pine forests of East Texas comprise only 14 percent of the state's area.

Permanent exhibits at the Texas Forestry Museum in Lufkin tell the story of Texas trees, ranging from a logging train to an exhibit of everyday life in an early sawmill town. "We're one of the largest forestry museums in the United States," says Carol Riggs, curator of the



Carol Riggs, Director of the Texas Forestry Museum located in Lufkin, Texas.

museum. "We're the only museum in Texas dedicated solely to the forestry."

The museum has three main exhibit areas—two galleries and an outdoor exhibit. One gallery highlights the tools and equipment used to harvest trees and the forestry practices that protect this

natural resource. The second gallery is devoted to manufacturing processes and the products that come from trees. The centerpiece of this wing is a 20-ton steam engine that once powered equipment in a sawmill.

In the logging gallery, Legend of the Piney Woods, a 7-foot-tall black walnut sculpture by Paula Devereaux-Kurth of Santa Fe, NM, captures in wood the spirit of the East Texas logger of the early 20th century. A collection of Smokey Bear memorabilia, a chain-saw exhibit and a blacksmith shop are exhibited near a slip-tongue, high-wheel cart from early logging days.

Outdoor exhibits concentrate on railroad log-handling equipment and include the depot from the sawmill town of Camden and several other large pieces of equipment, including log skidders, fire plows and tree planters. Nearby, an "urban wildscape" trail highlights a typical East Texas forest ecosystem and provides an opportunity for interpretation of native flora.

Museum collections of historical objects relate primarily to logging, wood products manufacturing, forestry, reforestation, fire control, logging railroads and sawmill life.

Corporate papers and collections are also preserved at the museum. Records of two logging railroads, the Houston, Shreveport & Gulf, and the Moscow, Camden & San Augustine, are the most extensive collections in the archives. The East Texas Sawmill Data Base, generated by the museum, records information about more than 4,600 early East Texas sawmills and other forest product mills. Researchers use the museum library and archives, including a collection of old photographs.

A fund-raising campaign is under way to expand the museum to house a permanent exhibit on the paper industry in Texas and the South. The historical focus



A "big wheel" is part of the Museum's exhibits.

of the exhibit will be on the old Southland Paper Mill (now Donohue Industries Inc.) in Lufkin, which produced the first newsprint made from Southern yellow pine in 1939.

Lufkin is about 120 miles north of Houston on us 59. The Texas Forestry Museum is several blocks west of Loop 287 at 1905 Atkinson Drive. Hours are 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays and 1–5 p.m. Sundays, except some holidays. Admission is free.

For further information, call the museum at 936-632-9535. There's also a Web site, www.txforestrymuseum.org, and e-mail can be sent to info@treestexas.com.