

Southern Forest Heritage Museum

Long Leaf, Louisiana

If you are looking for an interesting stop on your way to or from The Narrow Gauge Convention in Houston, I would like to suggest a visit to the Southern Forest Heritage Museum in Long Leaf, Louisiana. About a 4 1/2 hour drive from Houston. This is one of the only surviving complete sawmill complex left in the country. The Planer Mill was built in 1900 and was up dated several times but still includes its under-floor belt drive. The Sawmill was built in 1905 after a fire destroyed the first mill. It is a double bandsaw mill complete with saw filers, edger, trimers and a green chain for sorting lumber. There is also a complete belt driven Machine Shop with many of the machines still in operating condition that have been used in several of the on-going restruction projects. On the grounds are 3 of the steam engines (none working condition) as well as a Clyde Skidder which is the only one left in the US and of the 6 known McGiffert log loaders left in the US they have 2 on the grounds. One of the McGiffert log loaders is undergoing a complete restoration and is able to be powered with compressed air. The commissary has been turned into the museum display area. The Long Leaf Post Office has also been restored and other building on southern forest history such as the CCC building have been moved to the site. At the convention the President of the Museum Board will be giving a clinic on the museum history and how the Crowell Family donated the complete complex to the museum.

