



# GAMTRA

JULY 2005

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## COTTON GINNING DAYS



### UPCOMING SHOWS IN JULY 2005

#### ANNUAL SOUTHEASTERN OLD THRESHERS'

##### REUNION

##### DENTON FARM PARK

1366 JIM ELLIOT ROAD

DENTON, NORTH CAROLINA

JULY 1 – JULY 5, 2005

**"The Greatest steam, gas, and antique farm equipment show in the Southeastern U. S."**

#### History

"It all started with two guys and their flying machine! The story of Denton Farm Park and the Southeast Old Threshers' Reunion must begin with the introduction of Brown Loflin and Howard Latham.

Loflin is a lifelong resident of Davidson County's Handy community, the home of this museum park. Farmer, entrepreneur and con-summate hobbyist, he has done everything from driving race cars, flying and restoring old machinery to building the park. He is the organizer and director of the Threshers' Reunion.

Latham, a field engineer for Georgia-Pacific, lives a few miles east in Randolph County. One of their early associations was as co-owners of an airplane based at Loflin's Denton Airport, a grassed runway with an open-sided shelter as a hangar. Both piloted the airplane, and the airport was a frequent gathering place for other aviation hobbyists and their flying machines.

Latham may have been harboring a desire to be a railroad engineer. With traditional striped cap and red bandana, he drives the steam locomotive on the park's standard gauge Handy Dandy Railroad. "It's hard work and hot," he said, "but it's also fun when I see how much it's enjoyed by kids from 2 to 92."

The park's egg was laid in 1970 when flying buddies joined them in a July 4 "Fly-In," selling airplane rides and donating the money to the establishment of a volunteer rescue squad for the area. The project was so successful that long waiting lines resulted in lost revenue. The next year, local collectors demonstrated antique farm machines to ease the impatience, and the name was changed to "Fly-In and Threshers' Reunion."

Loflin and Latham are partners in the train and some of the restored old tractors and other machinery. .

In 1979, they recovered the locomotive from dereliction near Burnsville in the mountains of western North Carolina. Restoration of the engine, passenger cars and caboose, and building of the track, was a three-year project before the railroad's operation began in 1982.

The steam shovel was acquired in 1976 from a stone quarry near Harrisonburg, VA, where it had become a signboard.

In 1989, Loflin could resist no longer his ambition to rescue the deteriorating buildings of a plantation which pioneer Richmond Reid built in the 1940s on land along the banks of the Yadkin River, a few miles from the park in southern Davidson County. He obtained the buildings from Reid's descendants, who welcomed preservation, and he and park employees worked months on preparation and moving.

Recent land acquisition has expanded the park past 100 acres, providing space for additional parking and camping areas and a second entrance which has improved traffic flow. The future: "Bigger and better" Come and join in the fun!"

#### JULY 15-16

EARLY FARM DAYS

Franklin, NC

#### JULY 29-30

HIGH COUNTRY CRANK-UP

Boone, NC

#### COOL SPRINGS SHOW PICTURES

Images from this year's Cool Springs show can be seen at:  
<http://community.webshots.com/album/372023284CntEmb>

#### NEED CASTINGS?

If you are in need of quality and timely replacement castings for your engine or tractor, there is a new fellow in the casting business. He is Rick Rolands. Rick had been making many castings for me since the beginning of the year and his quality is some of the best I have ever seen. Rick can be reached at:

Tod Engine Works

1633 Westhampton Drive

Austintown, OH 44515

by phone at 330-728-2799 or by email at

[works@todengine.org](mailto:works@todengine.org)

The Tod Engine web site is <http://www.todengine.org/> and is home to one of the largest steam engine restorations in the nation. The castings he makes help fund the restoration of the Tod Engine.

#### ATTENTION MEMBERS

##### JULY 2005 MEETING WILL BE HELD

The meeting this month, **Thursday, July 7, 2005**, will be held at Western Sizzlin on Rankin Road, just north of I-85 on US 321. As always, we will "meet and eat" at 6:00PM and have our business meeting at 7:00PM. We look forward to seeing you there! ☺☺