

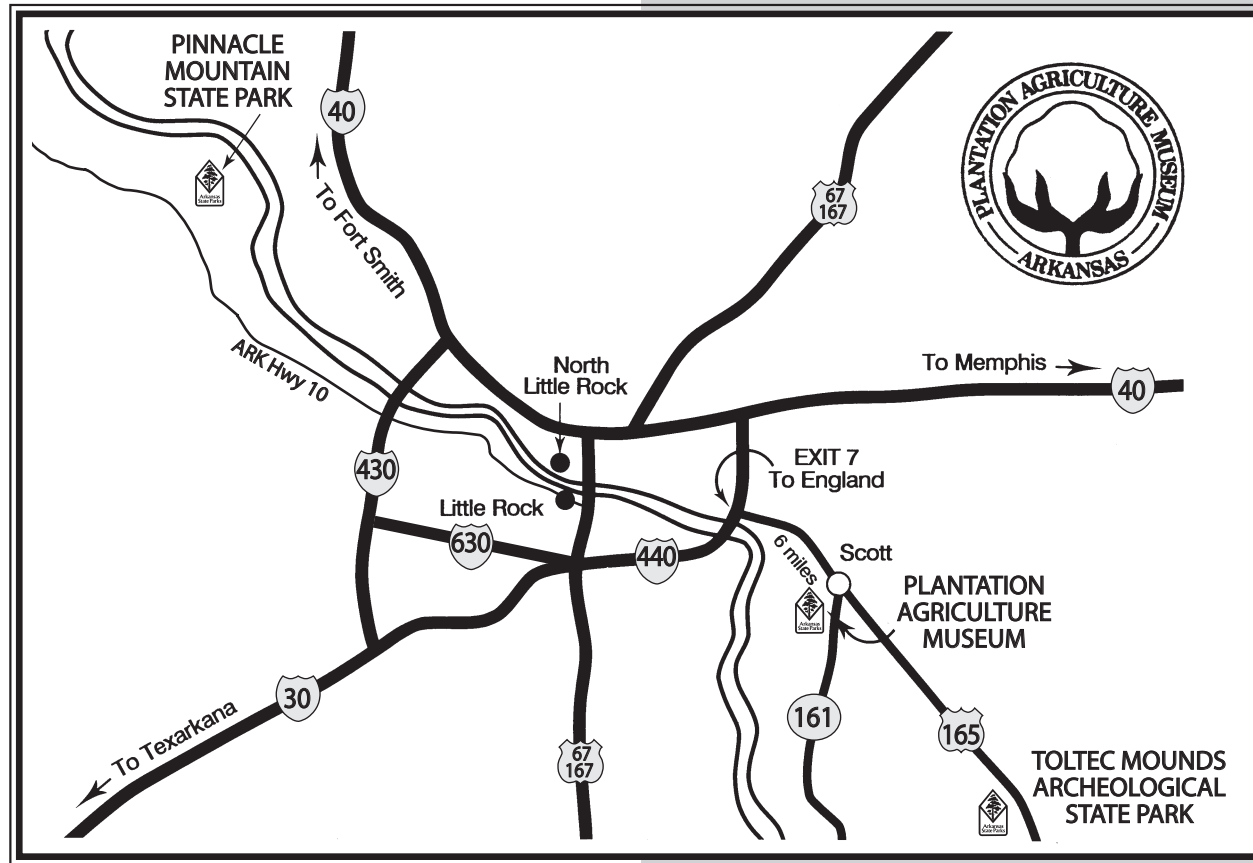
MUSEUM PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

A small fee allows you to tour the museum, gin, warehouse and outdoor exhibits. Visitors may request a guided tour. Schools and groups should make reservations in order to request programs that meet specific interests and Arkansas frameworks. Groups of 15 or more receive reduced admission; school groups pay a school group rate regardless of size. Family rates and annual passes are available. Allow at least two hours for an organized tour.

Educational, hands-on programs such as butter making, Dutch oven cooking, blacksmithing, old time games, and toy making are available upon request; fees apply. Workshops for professional development credit are offered for educators. Call for details.

The museum's *Cotton Patch Gift Shop* features farm toys, old time gifts, games, T-shirts and a large selection of books covering tractors, paper dolls, crafts, cookbooks, the Civil War, slavery and Arkansas history.

The Heritage Resource Center is available for family reunions, office meetings, birthday parties and workshops. Reservations are needed and fees apply. Call for details.



LOCATION

The museum is 14-miles east of Little Rock at the junction of U.S. Highway 165 and Arkansas Highway 161 at Scott. Take exit 7 of I-440 turn south on U.S. Hwy 165, go 5 miles to Museum and turn south on Arkansas Hwy. 161 one block to the museum.

HOURS OF OPERATION

OPEN:

Tuesday through Saturday — 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday — 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

CLOSED:

Monday (except Monday holidays), New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve through Christmas Day

For further information, contact:

Plantation Agriculture Museum
P.O. Box 87
Scott, Arkansas 72142
Telephone: (501) 961-1409
e-mail: plantationagrimuseum@arkansas.com

For more information on other Arkansas attractions, contact:

Arkansas State Parks
One Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Telephone: (501) 682-1191
www.ArkansasStateParks.com



The Plantation Agriculture Museum
The building was originally constructed in 1912 and was renovated in 1989.

PLANTATION AGRICULTURE MUSEUM



ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & TOURISM



As a part of its conservation mission, Arkansas State Parks has printed this brochure on recycled paper. All park services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis. Arkansas State Parks is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

PLANTATION AGRICULTURE MUSEUM

In preserving the state's rich heritage of plantation life and cotton agriculture, the Plantation Agriculture Museum offers visitors a glimpse of the past. Exhibits and programs interpret the period from Arkansas's admission to the Union in 1836, through World War II, when agricultural practices rapidly became mechanized. Tractors, mechanized cotton pickers, and modern chemicals forever replaced the old system of plantation agriculture and small farms.

THE MUSEUM BUILDING

Begin your tour in the Steele-Dortch Store. The building contains the gift shop, restrooms, ticket sales, and our main and temporary exhibits galleries.

The general store was built in 1912 by Conoway Scott. The smaller north wing was added in 1929 to serve as the Scott, Arkansas post office. In the early 1960s, a local planter, Mr. Robert L. Dortch, converted the building to a plantation museum. Arkansas State Parks acquired the property in 1986 and renovated the structure, opening it as the Plantation Agriculture Museum in 1989.

MAIN EXHIBIT GALLERY

Exhibits tell about cotton "from the field to the gin" in the museum's Cotton Agriculture section. The exhibits cover what a cotton farmer would do in a year's time: plowing, planting, cultivating and picking cotton. On exhibit are a breaking plow, middlebuster, fertilizer distributor, one row planter, and walking cultivator.

The museum interprets harvesting cotton through its picking exhibit. Visitors can see a cotton scale and *poise*, cotton sacks, and historic photographs of pickers at work. Picking cotton consumed more time and required more labor than any step in cotton production. Men, women, and children worked side by side in the fields, each dragging a cotton

sack or basket. In many areas, schools closed to allow children to pick cotton. People from cities often came to plantations and farms for picking. A field was picked two to four times between August and December.

An exhibit on ginning explains how Eli Whitney's idea for a "cotton engine" became what we call a cotton gin (*engine*) today. The exhibit includes an early gin and describes how a cotton gin works. The museum has a old-style cotton bale complete with the standard six metal straps and bagging and a bale scale used to weigh them.

A mule exhibit places emphasis on the important role as draft animals, a necessity on farms and plantations. The largest plantations had 200 or more mules, the smallest farms had one or two. One cotton farmer wrote that mules were "*as necessary as the sun and rain.*" The exhibit includes mule collars, harness, trace chains, name boards and farrier's equipment.

ADDITIONAL MAIN GALLERY EXHIBITS

An early 1900s kitchen features a wood-burning cook stove, ice box, pitcher pump and other items common on farms and plantation kitchens before rural electrification.

The museum changes temporary exhibits once a year and adds mini exhibits on a regular basis. A second gallery is devoted to changing exhibits from the museum's permanent collection.

OUTDOOR EXHIBITS

Just outside the main exhibit building a path leads past steam traction engines and other large machinery en route to the restored gin and the seed warehouse. The cotton pen is a structure built on runners. Pulled by mules or a tractor, it was positioned near the field being picked. Workers put newly picked cotton in the pen, where it was held until wagons hauled the crop to a gin.

Massive traction engines are next to the pen. These giant machines are early models and have steel lugged wheels powered by one-cylinder steam engines. Generally regarded as portable powerhouses, they were more likely to have powered threshers or cotton gins in the field than to have pulled plows.

Modern tractors did not appear until the 1920s and by the early 1940s signified the beginning of mechanized cotton agriculture. Tractors became increasingly popular, to the point that sharecroppers were "tractored off" the land by these machines that could do the work of several men with mules.

DORTCH GIN BUILDING

The Dortch Gin building houses a fully restored ginning system including two 80 saw gins stands, a two-bale press, blowers and belt driven line shafts (together called a Munger system) that were operated by the Dortch Gin Company. Exhibits include replica mules pulling a cotton wagon, photographs, and interpretation of the ginning equipment. The gin was powered by steam when built in 1919. Over the next decade, Dortch added a diesel engine, new gin stand feeders, and electric motors. By 1938 he had built a new gin and within a few years the equipment you see today was antiquated and no longer in use.



Restored cotton gin

Enter the restored seed warehouse through authentic Cotton Belt boxcars.



SEED WAREHOUSE NO. 5

The seed warehouse, built in 1948 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, stored and bagged seeds for the Robert L. Dortch Seed Farms. The building design includes truss construction to eliminate the need for interior supporting columns, a floor to ceiling auger system, improved ventilation, and sloping sides to accommodate the shape of huge piles of seeds. Exhibits and photographs tell the story of the historic structure, its use, Arkansas's main seed crops, seed breeding, seed processing machinery, and sacking and shipping operations. The warehouse had a Cotton Belt Railroad spur at its side. Today, visitors enter the restored warehouse through vintage Cotton Belt boxcars.



EXPLORE THE BEAUTY & HISTORY OF ARKANSAS!