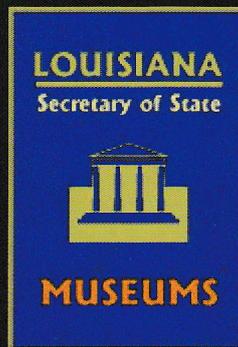


Touch, see and hear America's Crop at the

Louisiana State Cotton Museum



Lake Providence, Louisiana



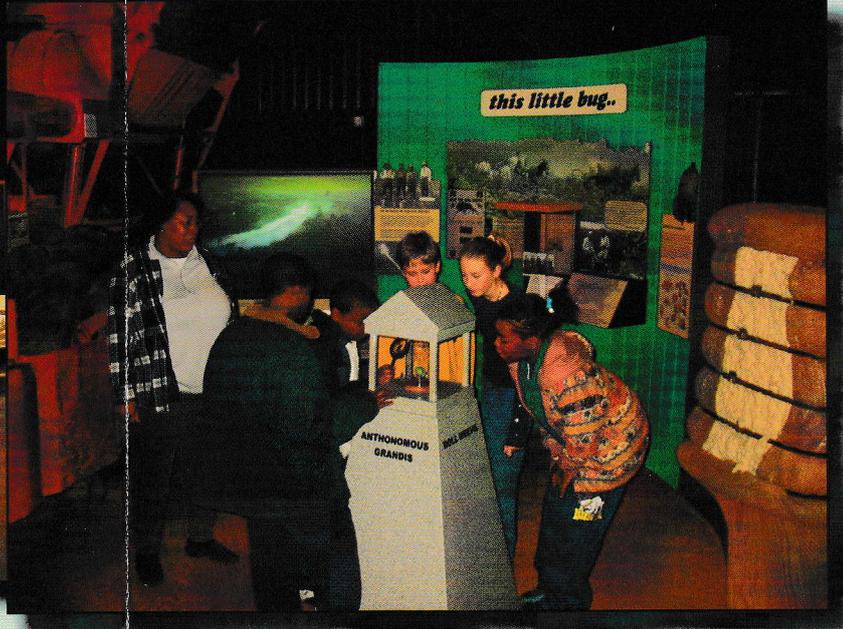
Museum

This seven-acre museum complex has a 100+ year old Planter's House original to the site and is surrounded by an original sharecropper's cabin, commissary, plantation church, replicated gin building and exhibit hall. You can experience historic footage in our orientation video, operate a music mixing-board, hear the blues on an old time jukebox, hear steamboat whistles and other interactive exhibits. This unique culture has shaped not only the South, but much of America.

Our economics, technology, westward movement, Civil War, music, transportation, labor, and exports were all greatly impacted by Cotton. No other agricultural crop has had such a dramatic effect on America.

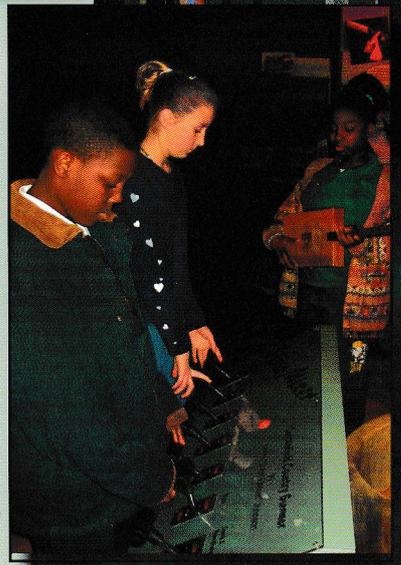
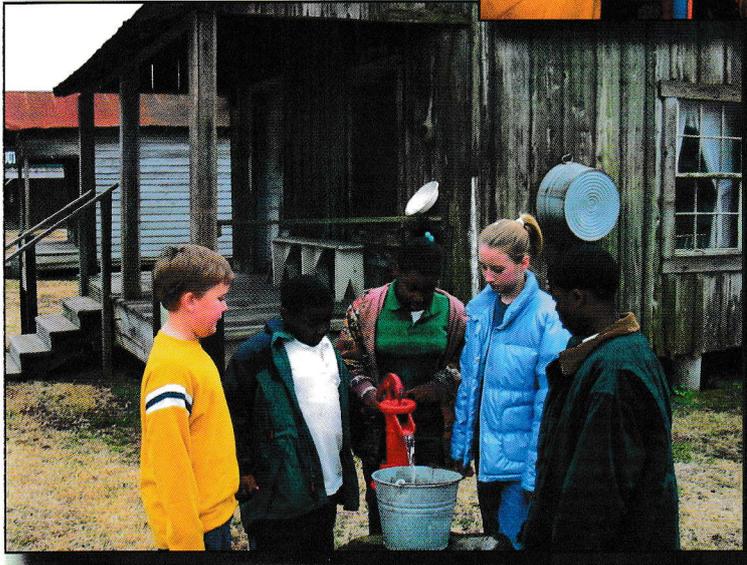
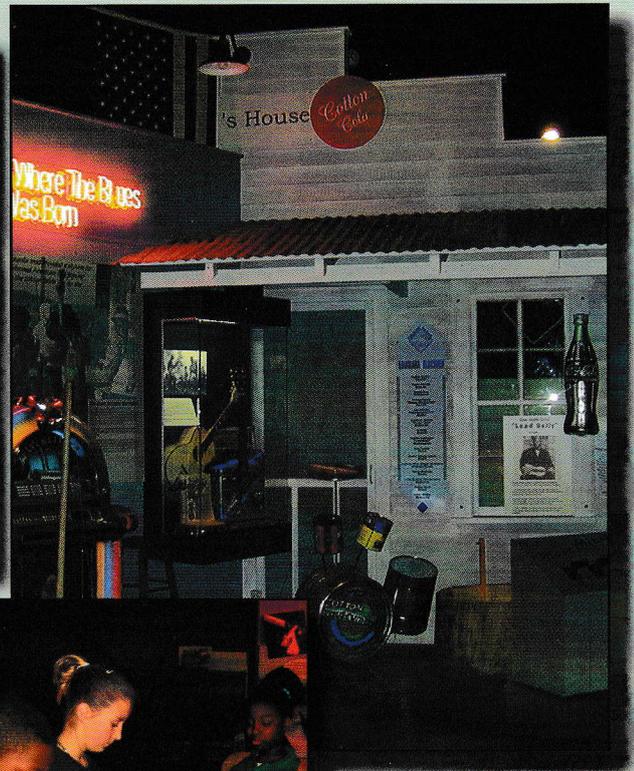
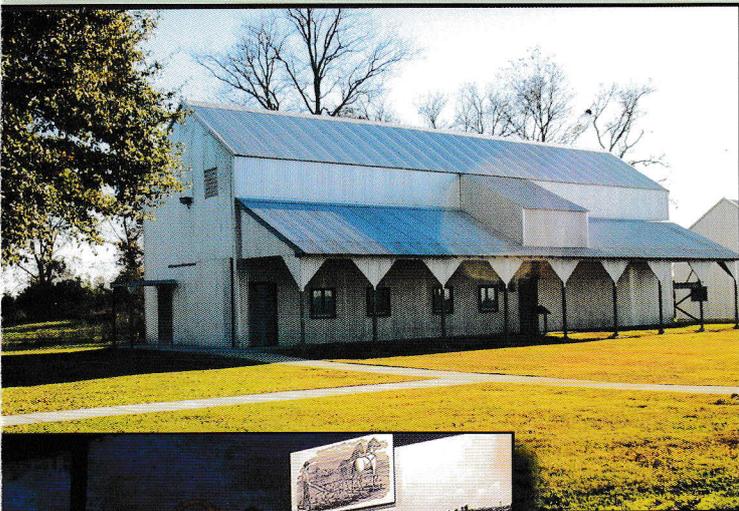
Come join us and experience for yourself this

Story of Cotton.



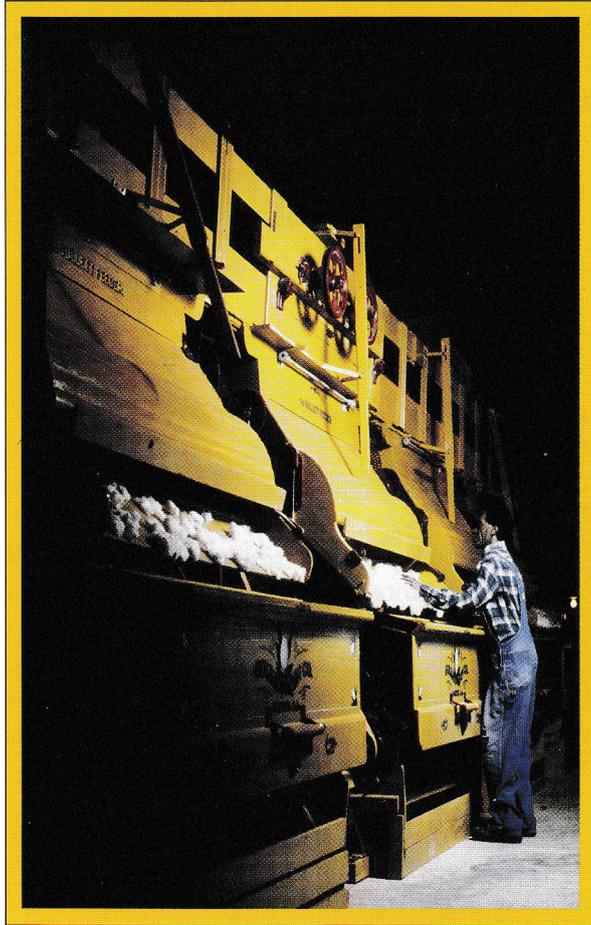
History

There's a world of history behind the cotton shirt you wear. From field to factory, cotton historically employed more Americans than any other industry. And no other product has figured so prominently in America's history at home and abroad. Cotton has impacted on world trade, technological development, the American Expansion, African American history, The Civil War and the Great Depression.



Visit the historic Homer
COTTON GIN

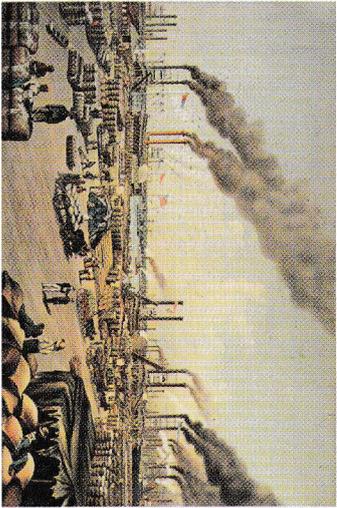
At the
Louisiana State Cotton
Museum,
Lake Providence, Louisiana



Louisiana's first electric
powered cotton gin

Gins are a necessary ingredient in cotton culture in the United States. The machines themselves remove the tenacious seeds from the fiber of the upland cotton plant, making the fiber available for manufacturing into cloth. The development of the sawtooth gin technology in the 1790s was a pivotal event in United States history. Within a generation, cotton became the young nation's number one export, contributing to the growth of shipping in New York City and New Orleans, textile manufacturing in New England, and westward expansion into the Mississippi River valley.

By the twentieth century, cotton culture had a grip on most of the agricultural, rural South. The ginning business was being



The Historic New Orleans Collection

separated from plantation operations and small farmers and planters alike could take their cotton to new commercial gins, such as the Homer Gin, that employed efficient industrial systems. These gins were factories that had machinery not only for removing the seeds from cotton but cleaning it and packing it in bales for shipment.

“You had to watch yourself to keep from putting your hand in there where the saws moved. You had to take it very easy and watch yourself.”

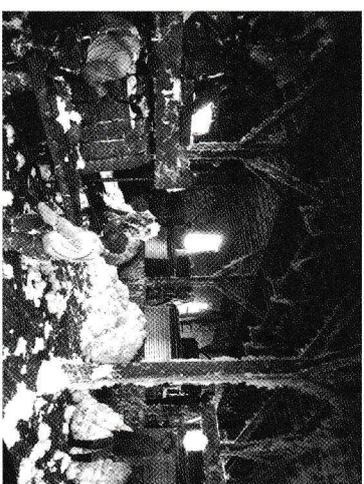
Dan Henderson,
gin hand

“There were always people hanging around, and there was always storytelling going on, and a lot of socializing going on there at the gin. People bringing cotton in that were waiting to get it ginned off were always visiting.”

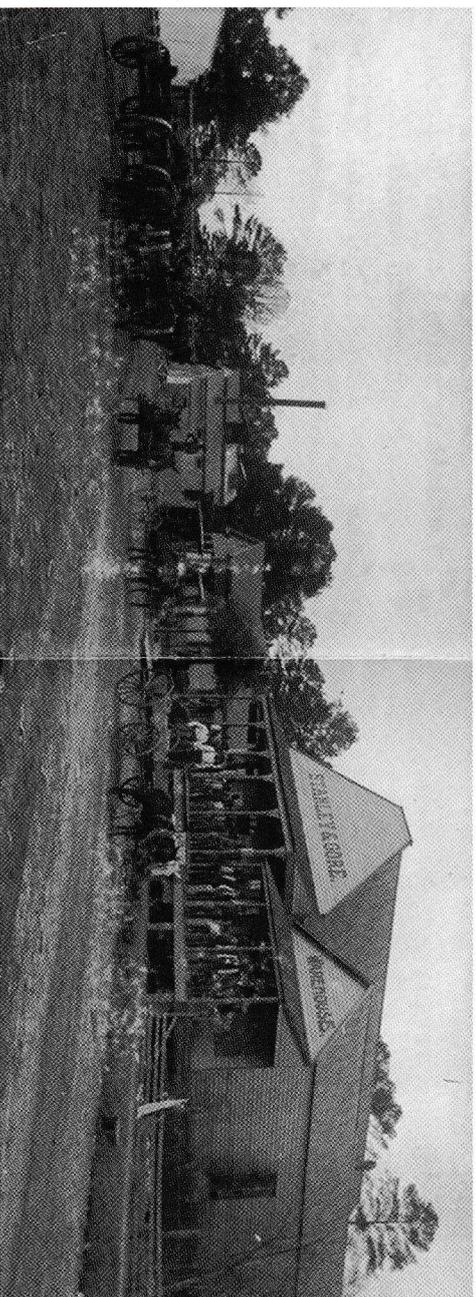
Harvey Howington,
gin manager



The Homer Gin represents the technology and work conditions experienced by the last generation to know the dominance of the cotton industry in their lives. In the 1920s, cotton gins such as this one were spread across north Louisiana, sometimes only a few miles apart, serving an economic need as well as being a center of community activity during the harvest season.



Opened in 1928 as the Newman and Kinnebrew Gin in Homer, Louisiana, it was probably the first electric-powered gin in the state and utilized the latest industrial ginning system. It ceased operations in the 1940s as cotton “played out” in the hill parishes. The machinery was never upgraded to handle mechanically picked cotton, and was eventually dismantled, restored and reinstalled in a new building at the Louisiana State Cotton Museum.





“Where the saws are running, there’d be a hum to it. You could hear ‘em humming, they’d be going so fast, and they’re sharp like Gar fish teeth.”

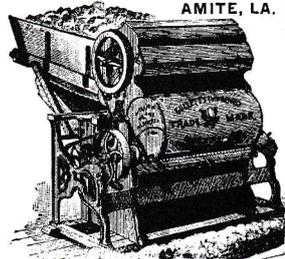
Percy Finley, gin hand

The Gullet Gin Company manufactured the machinery in the Homer Gin. Founded by Benjamin David Gullet, it was the only gin making firm in Louisiana, and one of only four or five in the United States at the time.

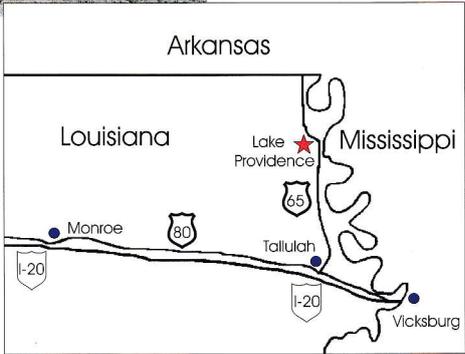
Born in North Carolina, Benjamin Gullet moved west with the cotton kingdom and began making saw gins in Aberdeen, Mississippi, where he took his first of three gin patents. After his factory burned down in 1862, Gullet relocated to New Orleans, Louisiana. Five years later the Mystic River Hardware Company of New London, Connecticut, put his famous “Steel Brush Gin” into production. Mystic continued its investment in Gullet by opening a factory in Amite, Louisiana named the Gullet Gin Company with Gullet himself in charge of production. The Gullet Gin Company continued well into the twentieth century and was eventually absorbed by Moss-Gordin and then Continental Gin Company.



**GULLETT'S
MAGNOLIA GIN**
AMITE, LA.



The Foremost Standard Cotton Gin of the world.



The Homer Gin
Louisiana State Cotton Museum
Highway 65 north
Lake Providence, Louisiana 71254

Hours:
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Weekdays



The exhibits interpret the social and economic history of the gin and were made possible by a grant from the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.