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## LOGGING IN THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMP

Affectionately known as a “loki” due to its diminutive size, this 5-ton Plymouth Gasoline Locomotive , 36” gauge, was rebuilt in 1943 for pioneer logger Moses R. White, Jr., by A. L. Guille Machinery Company., Norfolk, Virginia, for \$2,200.00. The engine was constructed on a four-wheel narrow-gauge railroad truck geared to a Buda gasoline engine.

Moses R. White, Jr., began his career as a lumberman with Richmond Cedar Works and John L. Roper Lumber Companies, harvesting cedar in the Great Dismal Swamp. Due to its superior characteristics, Atlantic White Cedar (Juniper) is one of the most valuable trees on the East Coast. It splits easily, finishes smooth, and is very resistant to decay. It is also light in weight and has an aromatic bouquet that freshens a room. Juniper makes light, tough boats, and the wood is prized for furniture, house siding and cedar shakes, or shingles.

He ran his own shingle and sawmill on U. S. Highway 158 in Gates County and logged in the Swamp. From his earliest years of lumbering, Mr. White favored “tram lines,” temporary narrow-gauge railroads, to haul logs out to the mill. He used 6-to 8-inch trees felled directly across the right-of-way for railroad ties. From a distance, the trains looked toy-like, but sometimes he had as many as 15 log cars slowly being pulled out of the wilderness by these small narrow-gauge locomotives, carrying juniper, pine and hardwood timber. At one time, he had as many as eight miles of track reaching into the heart of the Great Dismal Swamp.

Mr. White used a locomotive at several mill sites, including South Mills, Roper, Bertie County, NC, and St. Brides, VA. His locomotive logging operation spanned the years 1933 to 1975, with his last sale of lumber on July 14, 1988. He passed away in 1992 at the age of 91.

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## JUNIPER LOGGING IN THE OLD DAYS

In the days before the invention of the steam engine, logging was a rough trade high in manpower and low in technology. If you had an axe and a saw and plenty of muscle, you were in business. That combination was sufficient for most trees, but not for a hearty swamp species like Atlantic White Cedar (Juniper) and Bald Cypress. Even if you could get into the deep swamp to cut the trees, there was often no way to transport them to streams and rivers to get them to market.

The invention of the steam engine changed all that. It is estimated that with steam technology, loggers cut nearly 50 percent of North Carolina’s Juniper forests between 1870 and 1890.

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## SPECIAL THANKS FOR MAKING THIS EXHIBIT POSSIBLE

### THE MOSES R. WHITE, JR., FAMILY

M. R. White, III, son, and wife Jennie  
Loyce Twiford, daughter, and husband Milton  
Kay Weeks, daughter, and husband Wayne  
Margie Blevins, daughter, and husband Harry



### REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM "BILL"

#### OWENS

North Carolina General Assembly  
for his foresight and kind assistance with  
this project



### NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

J. W. JONES LUMBER COMPANY

UNION CAMP CORPORATION

GORDON SHEET METAL COMPANY



Restoration by

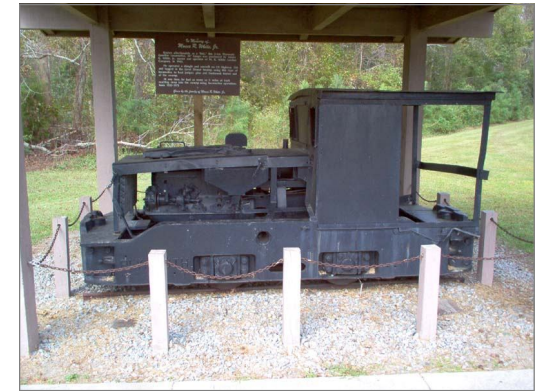
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Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center

## The "Loki" Educational Exhibit



Completed October 1997

### *In Memory of... Moses R. White, Jr.*

Known affectionately as a "loki," this 5-ton Plymouth Gasoline Locomotive, 36" Gauge, was purchased by Moses R. White, Jr., owner and operator of M. R. White Lumber Company, in 1943.

He operated a shingle and sawmill on US Highway 158 and logged in the Great Dismal Swamp, using this type of locomotive to haul juniper, pine and hardwood timber out of the swamp.

At one time, he had as many as 8 miles of track reaching deep into the swamp using locomotive operations from 1933-1975

*Given by the family of Moses R. White, Jr.*