

# FIELD TRIP 2005

## 'SWEET HOME ALABAMA'

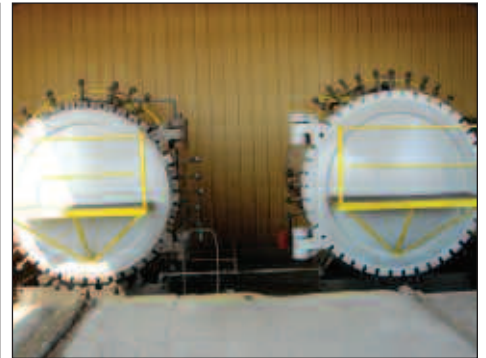
The first week in June has become known as the time for one of RTA's most important annual activities—the Field Trip. Once only the stomping ground of certain committee members, the trip is now open to all members. And, it shows.

This year, 50 intrepid trekkers came to Birmingham, Ala., to spend two days traversing the state and visiting manufacturing sites, where they learned about the latest industry innovations. This photo essay illustrates these travels.

### DAY 1



Arriving near Six Mile, Ala., (actual name of unincorporated village) bright and early, a bus load of RTA members were met by Travis Cottingham of Cahaba Pressure Treated Products. Travis tells all that Cahaba was started 43 years ago by Kermit Stephens and has developed into one of the South's largest treated wood pole companies. Cahaba is one of the few wood treating companies that specializes in all the major wood preservatives. CCA (below left), penta and creosote (below middle), and copper naphthenate (below right) cylinders can all be found on site.



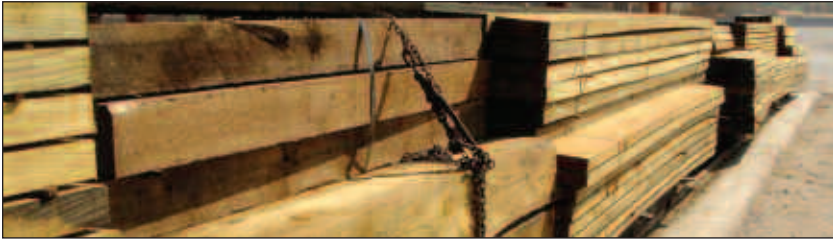
And what a site! Acres and acres of pole storage facilities surround the pressure treating operations.



One of the requirements for all electric utility pole producers is branding and tagging each pole. Here, one of the tags identifies to whom this pole will be shipped.



The group was met along the way by Scott McNair (left) of Merichem who took time to show off some copper naphthenate timbers, including some ties that had been pre-treated with borate (right). Research has shown that it is possible to dual treat with copper naphthenate as well as creosote.

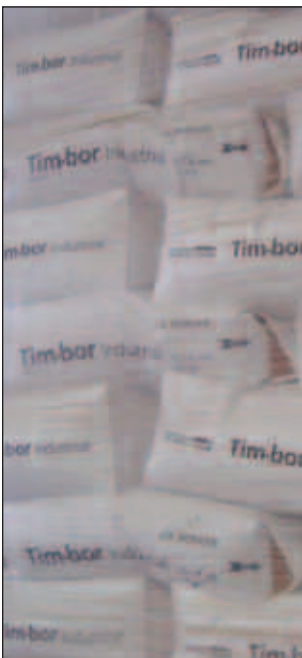


Even without dual treatment, copper naphthenate has been shown to be an effective wood preservative and was included in American Wood-Preservers' Association standards for hardwood timbers this year.

Just up the road from Cahaba is one of Alabama's premier integrated forest products operations—Seaman Timber Company. In addition to its treating operations, which are primarily dedicated to serving Norfolk Southern Railroad, Seaman's operations include sawmills, hardwood lumber operations and pallet manufacturing.



One of Seaman Timber's most recent ventures is the dual treating process employing pre-treatments with Timbor followed by creosote treatment. Below, Terry Amburgey of TASKpro and Cliff Jones of Osmose discuss the process with trip attendees.



Above, Norfolk Southern's Preston Painter, Bill Rousis and Walt King and Koppers' Gary Williams (recently elected vice-chairman of the RTA Education Committee) discuss that well over 20,000 of these dual treated ties are now in Norfolk Southern tracks throughout the South.



Kenny Dailey (left) and Eddie Johnston (center) of Seaman Timber talk with Byron Hawkins to discuss the process, which starts with green untreated ties (above right) being pressure treated with Timbor and then dead-stacked for three weeks under cover to allow the borates to diffuse throughout the cross-section of the timber.



After that, the ties are restacked for air seasoning. Then, a few months later, they are treated with creosote (above). Jim Standish (right) discusses the process from the treating plant perspective.

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From an hour south of Birmingham to an hour north, our group traveled to Falkville, Ala., to the site of McCord Tie & Timber, where we were met by Mitchell and Jay McCord and Suellen Pesnell. Mitchell and Suellen flank Burke-Parsons-Bowlby's Buddy Downey (center), as Mitchell gives a little history about the plant.



Mitchell explained that this plant had been a waterborne operation owned by Walker Williams until it was auctioned to the McCord family in 2003. This is evidenced by the dual doored systems that once were popular with high volume CCA plants—the material enters one end and exits the other.



Mitchell and Jay further explain that they invested heavily to bring this into a state-of-the-art creosote operation that included the air quality hood systems on the cylinder doors, a new boiler system (above middle) with a precision self-actuated and metered feeding system, and a new endplating system (above right).

During the tour, some of RTA's strongest supporters, Jeff Broadfoot of Thompson Industries (left) and Billy Davis of Durable Wood Products, pose for a quick photo.



Before leaving, Rick Plehal of Railworks thanks Jay McCord and Suellen Pesnell for a great facility tour, as we all do!



After a long day, the bus made a final stop on the way back to the hotel to take in one of Birmingham's most famous sites, Vulcan. Vulcan is the second largest iron statue in the country (second only to the Statue of Liberty). He resides atop Red Mountain and overlooks the stunning site of the valley in which Birmingham grew up.



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# DAY 2

Another early start takes trip attendees to Montgomery and our first stop, Capital Veneer, where Pat Adams and Jay Cooper explain that the business is one of the oldest veneer operations in the South. Below, the key to any good veneer mill is a good source of logs. These, in turn, are peeled by lathes and cut into sheets for drying before being shipped to customers like Bruce Flooring, which then manufactures laminated flooring products.



Like all good stewards of the resource, Capital Veneer is keen on utilizing all the log. Any wood chips created in the operation are sold to local paper companies or consumed on site.



Capital is so intent on maximizing yield that every piece of veneer that is not up to grade is selected, re-cut and then pieced back together with a sophisticated piece of equipment from Germany.



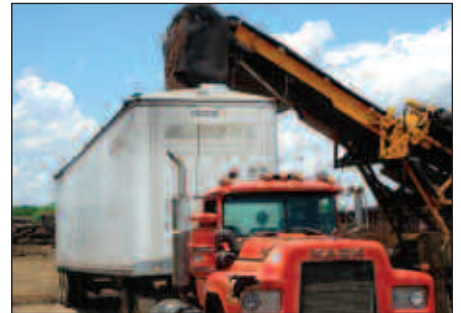
Pat Adams, who is the third-generation owner in the business, concluded the tour with a final question-and-answer session.

After an early lunch, we travel to Burnsville, Ala., to the site of National Salvage's tie grinding operation. Jimmy Friday (left) of National Salvage and Robert Herendeen (right) of Midwest Tie give a safety briefing prior to going on the yard.



Ties that are brought to this facility are carefully sorted to select two grades of landscape ties.

Below, RTA President Mike Neidert and Rob Churma of CP Rail learn what happens to the rest...



...which are ground (several at once by CBI's massive Magnum Force grinder) into chips that are shipped to the local paper company to be used as fuel in their EPA-approved boiler.



Up to 17 truckloads a day are churned out and sent to be burned as a biomass fuel. Now, that's a great way to be green!

Then, it's back on the bus to head to our final stop, Bibb Tie & Timber.



Bibb Tie & Timber, located in Centreville, is a subsidiary of Seaman Timber Company. Here, Gene Rowland chats with Doug Gentry of Burke-Parsons-Bowlby and others about cutting both ties and timbers up to 24-inches square.



As the day winds down, we pause for a final group picture. We all want to thank everyone along the way for a great adventure in learning—and especially Robby Johnson of Seaman Timber Co., who organized this, the largest field trip in the past 10 years. Thanks to all!

## FIELD TRIP PARTICIPANTS

Byron Hawkins; Dwight Dunford and Bruce Hobbs, Acme Wood Preserving; Roy Henderson and John Reinmann, Appalachian Timber; Grady Brafford, Arch Wood Protection; Chris Banning, Asphalt Fuel Supply; Colin McCown, AWWPA; Gene Mall, BioPreserve; Floyd Bowlby, Harry Bressler, Buddy Downey, Doug Gentry, Alan Miller and Mike Neidert, Burke-Parsons-Bowlby; Rob Churma, Canadian Pacific; Billy Davis, Durable Wood Products; Alberto and Laura Garrido, Grupo Industrial Naranjo; Paul Ladd, Rusty Pfeiffer and Gary Williams, Koppers Inc.; Gerald Davis and Scott McNair, Merichem Company; Bill Moss, MiTek; Jack Hughes, Walt King and Bill Rousis, Norfolk Southern; Will Cumberland, North American Tie & Timber; Mark Blattie, Clif Jones and Kenny Witzel, Osmose; Quincy Andrews, QA Consulting; Bob Matthews, RailWorks; Richard Plehal, RailWorks Wood Waste; Bernie Gierschke, Robbins Engineering; Jim Gauntt, RTA; Robby Johnson and Barry Cooner, Seaman Timber Co.; Terry Amburgey, TASKpro; Jimmy Watt, The Crosstie Connection; Jeff Broadfoot, Thompson Industries; Paul Merrick, Trus Joist; Gary Hunter, Union Pacific; Liz Russell, David Whitted and Jeff Parrett, Webster Industries.