

= Kentucky Railway Museum =

The Kentucky Railway Museum , now located in New Haven , Kentucky , United States , is a non-profit railroad museum dedicated to educating the public regarding the history and heritage of Kentucky 's railroads and the people who built them . Originally created in 1954 in Louisville , Kentucky , the museum is at its third location , in extreme southern Nelson County . It is one of the oldest railroad stations in the United States .

The museum owns four steam locomotives , six diesel locomotives and over a hundred pieces of rolling stock . Four of the pieces are separately on the National Register of Historic Places : the Louisville and Nashville Steam Locomotive No. 152 , the Louisville and Nashville Combine Car Number 665 , the Mt . Broderick Pullman Lounge Obs Sleeping Car , and the Frankfort and Cincinnati Model 55 Rail Car .

= History =

The site of the current museum was built by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad from 1856 to 1857 , on their old line , which ran to Lebanon , Kentucky . The line was of vital importance to the Union cause , making it a frequent target of Confederate forces under John Hunt Morgan , and others , during the 1860s ; the nearby bridge was even destroyed . The railroad station on the site now is a 1990s replica of the station which was built at the site in 1910 .

The museum was chartered in 1954 by railroad enthusiasts from Louisville , through the Kentucky General Assembly , who wished to preserve steam locomotives and other rail paraphernalia . One of its very first displays was the Louisville and Nashville # 152 locomotive , a caboose , and a wooden coach . These first donations , including railroad track , were from the Monon Railroad , and the Louisville and Nashville Railroad . The museum has moved twice since it was chartered , from its original location in Louisville . The first site was at 1837 East River Road , where the Louisville Soccer Fields are now located . This first location was 6 acres (2 @ 4 ha) in size , and was fenced and lighted by the Louisville Parks Department . The site opened for the public on May 30 , 1958 , with its dedication taking place on September 30 , 1957 . The museum eventually left the first location because of flooding from the nearby Ohio River , and a general lack of necessary space . The worst of these floods was in March 1964 .

In December 1975 it was decided to move the museum to a larger and safer location . The museum was moved in 1977 to the Ormsby Village area at the corner of La Grange Road and Dorsey Lane on land leased from Jefferson County , and known as Ormsby Station . The Louisville and Nashville # 152 locomotive was left at River Road to be repaired . Ormsby Station was situated on 32 acres (13 ha) . However , the county informed the museum that the lease would not be renewed in 1993 ; the land was in a highly valuable commercial area .

With the edict from Jefferson County , it became necessary to move to the current site in New Haven , which opened on July 4 , 1990 . The original New Haven location was 8 acres (3 @ 2 ha) , with a building , and was donated by Lewis and Chester Simms , two New Haven businessmen , along with their wives (Elizabeth Jo and Nora respectively) . It used the last eighteen miles remaining of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad 's old Lebanon line , then under the control of CSX Transportation , which had taken control of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in the 1970s . Train excursions began at the New Haven site in May 1991 . The move also inspired the renovation of the New Sherwood Hotel .

Many of the donations to move the museum from Louisville to New Haven were due to the efforts of Glenn Rutherford , a reporter for the Louisville Courier Journal . During the fund raising for the move Rutherford told many stories regarding the trains at the museum . He was singularly honored for his efforts in November 2003 .

The Kentucky Railway Museum faced vandalism concerns in its new location . In June 1992 it became necessary to build a razor wire perimeter fence after three juveniles (of an average age of twelve) damaged several of the historic cars and trains . Rich Collins , then the museum director , worried about the facility looking " like Fort Knox or a penal colony " .

In 1999 the Kentucky Railway Museum was given a grant by CSX Transportation to start a traveling exhibit .

There is one other heritage railroad in Nelson County : My Old Kentucky Dinner Train , which is based at the Old Louisville and Nashville Station in Bardstown , Kentucky .

= = Attractions = =

Among the steam locomotives is Louisville and Nashville Railroad # 152 , a 4 @-@ 6 @-@ 2 Pacific style that is believed to be the last operating steam locomotive from the L & N. The museum operates a heritage railroad and offers excursion trains on selected weekends in summer and fall . The line is a portion of the L & N 's former main line from Lebanon Junction to Corbin ; the museum operates the segment from Boston to New Haven , with the line having been abandoned east of the museum site . There is a large model train layout and a gift shop at New Haven , in a brick building that is a replica of the former L & N depot there .

= = = Locomotives = = =

The old Louisville and Nashville Steam Locomotive # 152 is one of the trains used to take passengers to Boston , Kentucky , and back . It was donated to the museum by Louisville and Nashville Railroad President William H. Kendall in 1957 . It is the oldest known remaining 4 @-@ 6 @-@ 2 Pacific to exist . It is also the " Official State Locomotive of Kentucky " , designated as such on March 6 , 2000 .

Another locomotive that dates back to the Kentucky Railway Museum 's early days is Monon Route 's Diesel Engine No. 32 . It was painted black and gold by Monon , and kept as such , to match the school colors of Purdue University , located in West Lafayette , Indiana . It was purchased by Monon in 1948 , and then acquired by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in August 1971 . It became a display at the museum in 1972 .

= = = Rail Cars = = =

Several historic rail cars are at the facility .

The Louisville and Nashville Combine Car Number 665 was one of only two " two wood side steel " train cars ever made . It was designed for the times of the Jim Crow laws ; whichever end was the front during the trip would hold white passengers , while the rear held black passengers . It was given to the Kentucky Railway Museum by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in 1958 . During the Civil War Centennial observances of the 1960s this car was pulled by the famous Civil War @-@ era steam locomotive The General , touring various parts of the Eastern U.S. rail network .

The Mt . Broderick Pullman Car was a four @-@ star hotel on rails , with polished brass restroom fixtures , and pull out beds . The Pullman Company sold the car to the museum in 1958 .

The other historic car at the facility on the National Register is the Frankfort and Cincinnati Model 55 Rail Car , also known as The Cardinal due to its red color . It is a gas @-@ powered motor rail car that formerly ran the Frankfort and Cincinnati Railroad 's " Whiskey Route " between Frankfort , Kentucky and Paris , Kentucky .

= = = Excursions = = =

Train rides leave regularly from the museum to Boston , Kentucky , and back , with picturesque views of the Rolling Fork River Valley along the way . The train crosses roads fourteen times on a single one @-@ way trip . The total trip is 22 miles (35 km) and lasts approximately one hour . At various times special excursions will involve themes such as train robberies , haunted trains , Easter Bunny , Santa Claus , and Thomas the Tank Engine .

= = = Exhibits = = =

One of the buildings at the facility holds a model train display . The model trains are in glass covered dioramas , covering a total area of 3 @, @ 000 square feet (280 m2) . Dioramas include a German @-@ landscape featuring a village and carnival , and another depicting convicts working on placing rails .