

A Donkey, is a Donkey, Except When It is a Machine

It was only natural that the hard-working steam engines that started appearing in the woods were called "donkeys".

They pulled far more than their weight, they could generate amazing sounds for their size, and they often were a little stubborn about doing what they were told.

The earliest ones were quite small, but pulled logs with a heavy cable. There was a reason for the nearby horse . . . someone had to pull the cable back out in the woods!

But donkeys grew larger and more complex over the years - the medium sized one shown in the middle on the left is on a set of skids, or sled, and is pulling itself up a steep hill to move to another workplace. In that picture, Warren Fay is sitting astride the cable - a dangerous place to be if it snapped!

The giant machine belonged to Monroe Logging, and set the record one day, during which they skidded and loaded 500,000 board feet of timber (48 train car loads) in a single 8 1/2 hour shift.

This machine could skid logs and load train cars at the same time, a full duplex operation using two engineers and a large crew.



The first steam donkeys were small contraptions.



It did not take too many years for larger ones to appear.

