

Tucson Children's Museum Project

Earlier this year, Dick Izen came to me with an idea - that we (TGRS) should become involved with the Tucson Children's Museum. After kicking it around for a while, I said that it was a laudable thing, and asked Dick if he would look into just what we could do for the Museum. Well, as you know from the reports in the Newsletter, the idea became a real project, one that is in its final stages of completion. Dick has done a marvelous job of investigating the needs of the Museum in regard to what TGRS can provide. Further, he has gathered a group of our members who were willing to lend their talents to the project, and he has coordinated the development and implementation of the project to its completion. His is an example of what can be done by anyone willing to expend some effort and time on an idea, even though at first it may be very nebulous. Along the way, Dick has had the very capable assistance of Nick Buchholz, Bob Conrad, Phyllis Dirksen, Willis Fagg, Jack Forgeus, Gary Martin, Glenn and Janet Mitchell, Chuck and Ruth Taylor. If I've failed to mention anybody, I apologize. In closing, I feel that TGRS owes Dick, and his "crew" a hearty "Thank you" for a job well done. Norm Ulmer

TCM offers thanks to TGRS

By Dick Izen

A number of people at the Tucson Children's Museum have expressed their thanks for the work done so far on the new train gallery and have asked me to pass those words of appreciation on to the club. All of the club members deserve thanks for supporting the project but special thanks are due to the many members who pitched in and worked so hard to get the gallery partly finished before the Christmas holidays. Before I get to that, let me give you a quick status report.

Status

On December 15, the last day the museum was closed to the public we completed the track work and installed the overhead train. Glenn Mitchell's momentum system (more on that later) worked perfectly. Press the lit button on the cabinet and the light turns out and the 12 car train works up to speed, makes a complete loop and glides to a halt. Gary Martin completed some back drop painting and installed several parts of the foam tunnel scenery.

In addition, on the same date, Norm Ulmer and his locomotive construction crew brought in the components and assembled the crawl through locomotive. The parts went together very well and we installed rug material in the lower boiler and both the entrance and exit ramps. It is over ten feet long and really looks impressive.

Early on the morning of the 18th, before the museum opened, Nick Buchholz and I swapped the GP-40 for the RS-3 with the TV camera and sound. Both worked well though the camera is having problems. Nick suspects that heat builds up near the power supply and will install a cooling fan in the GP-40 to see if that alleviates the problem. Even without the TV camera we now have sounds of the diesel, horns blowing as it rounds the north curves and bell ringing as it approaches the building fronts in the 'town'.

Work Crews

As I noted above many members have gotten involved in the project reflecting favorably on the club and its spirit. I hate to give a list of names because I am almost certain to leave someone out and offend them. At the same time those members who stepped up with donations and time and effort deserve to be recognized. I apologize in advance if I inadvertently miss anyone.

Elevated Loop

Nick Buchholz, Chuck Taylor, Willis Fagg and Dick Izen were the primary construction crew. Gary Martin painted walls and built foam scenery including the tunnel portals. Glenn Mitchell designed, built and installed the momentum and control circuitry. False front buildings used for scenery came from Roy Eberbach (who built and contributed and astonishing 14 false fronts), Dottie Fagg (2 shops), Jack Forgues, Kirk Lander, Tom and Gretchen Schaefer, Jerry and Rita Tulino and myself. Byron Skinner donated a full box of 5 foot straight track while Jim Miller donated 2 pieces of rolling stock.

Locomotive

This was built largely by Norm Ulmer with the assistance of others at several work days and in assembly at the museum. The crew(s) that helped Norm included Nick Buchholz, Glenn Mitchell, Jim Miller, Bob Conrad, Chuck Taylor and myself.

Posters and Photos

While not yet fully installed this work was headed up by Janet Mitchell with Ruth Taylor, Phyllis Dirksen and Peggy Martin on her crew.

Magnetic Train Cars

I built these and Ruth Taylor researched and wrote the posters explaining the typical lading of each car. These posters are not yet installed as the museum is in the process of having them translated so that they will be bi-lingual.

Remaining Plans

While we installed as much as we could prior to Christmas at the museum's request, there is still work to be done. Chuck and Ruth Taylor are looking for edging to prevent the carpet in the locomotive from unraveling. Gary Martin and Glenn Mitchell have plans for light up 'How does a Steam Engine Work?' and a "How does a Diesel Engine Work?" displays. As mentioned above we still have posters to install and fine tuning for the closed circuit TV system. Our plans are to be hard at it on the first Monday in January. In the interim a hearty "Well Done" and "Thank you for your efforts" to everyone who has pitched in.