

The Big Train Project Status Report (Part 25)

The EnterTRAINment Junction Family and Friends day on 15 July was a great success. Over 1200 people attended, and I was happy to see and talk to many of you who attended. The paid staff got some valuable experience and the volunteers got the opportunity to mingle with the participants. We got some great feedback, which hopefully we will be able to use for improving the layout and the facility. The first preview weekend (18-20 July) also went very well. The paying customers were very impressed, and over 100 one-year family passes were sold. By the time you read this, the official grand opening will have taken place on 1 August, and the facility will be open seven days a week thereafter.

During all of the preview activity, work on the layout has continued at a great pace. The live water is running, with the most impressive feature being the lake on the early period peninsula (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Early Period Live-Water Lake

The Middle Era city has had the streets installed around the trolley tracks and it's starting to sprout additional buildings as they are being finished and installed (Figure 2).



Figure 2 Middle Era City

The Museum has been stocked with excellent exhibits, including the sizable and very impressive mockup of a set of steam engine driving wheels and connecting rods. (Figure 3)

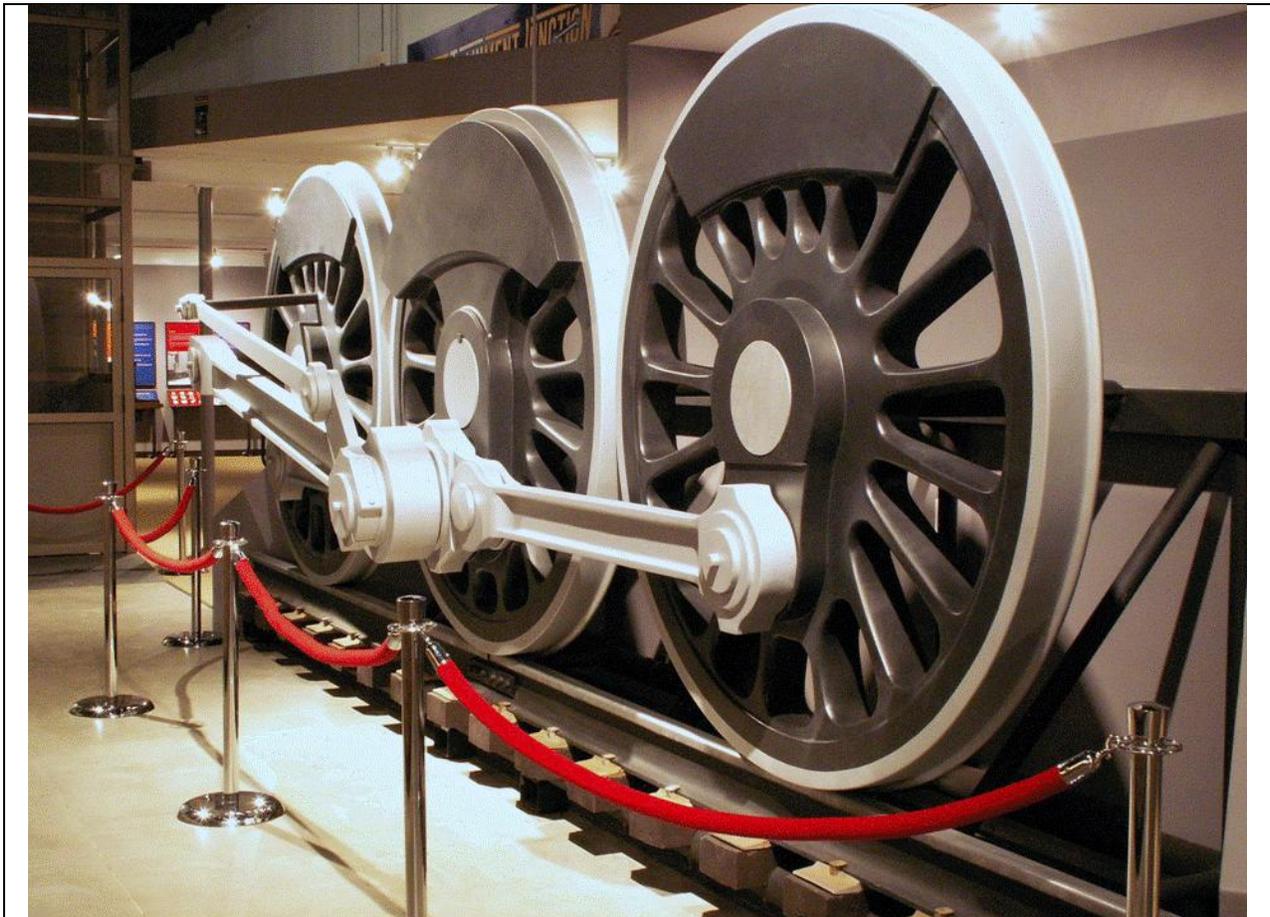


Figure 3 Locomotive Drivers Mockup

The Modern City is developing well. Most of the blocks have building facades hiding the access holes and building support structures. The streets have been painted, and vehicles have been added to liven it up (Figure 4).



Figure 4 Modern City Buildings

One of the special features of the modern city is use of buildings with reflective surfaces which allow viewers to get an indirect view of the “capitol” building. That scheme turned out really well, as you can see in Figure 5.

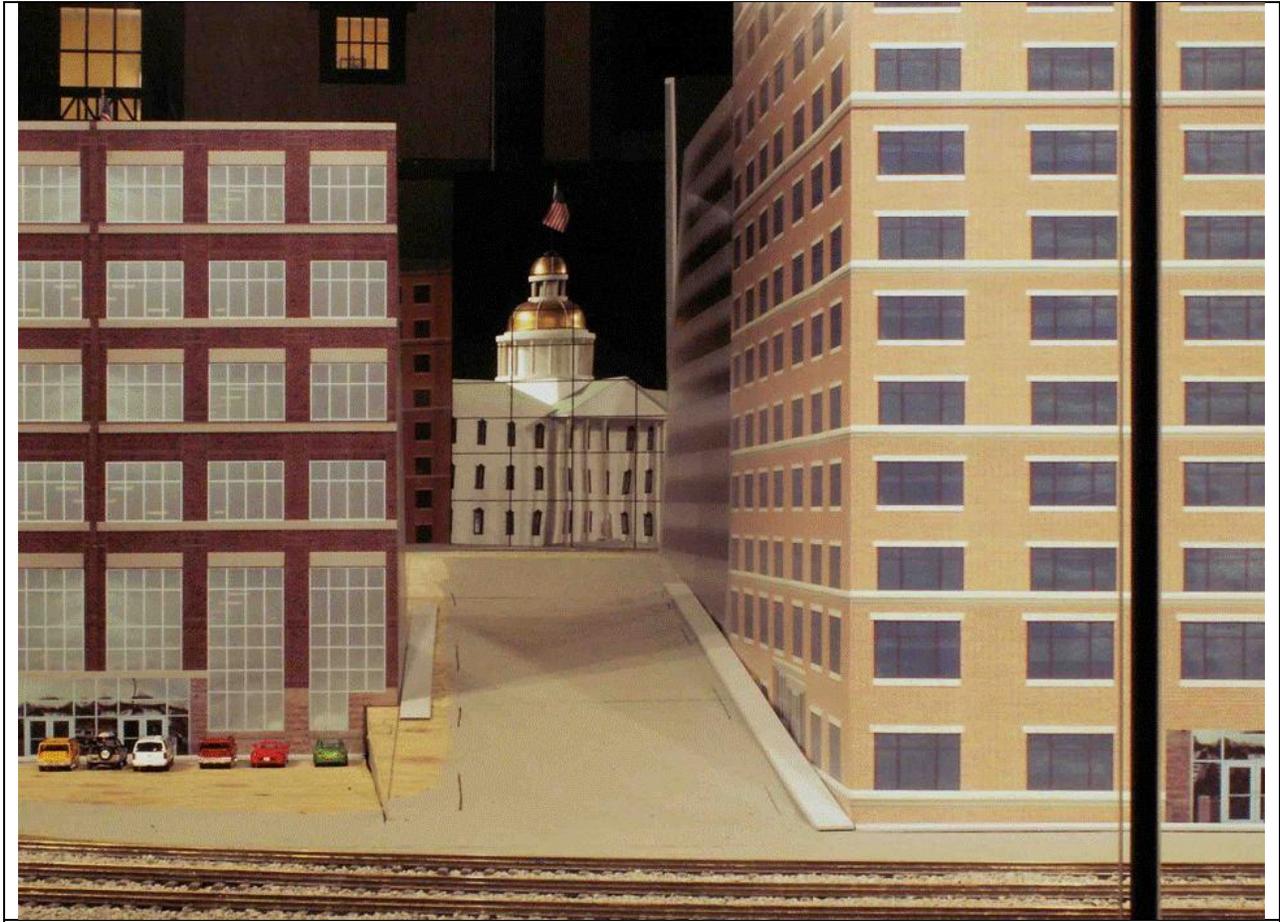


Figure 5 The Reflected Capitol Building

Finally, the last scene in the layout tour, the Modern Yard, has been populated with freight cars (Figure 6). And, the mirror is having its illusionary effect as visitors look for what they think is an extension of the layout in the gift shop, after they exit the layout.



Figure 6 The Modern Yard

Even with all this progress, a lot remains to be done, especially in the area of scenic details, which need to be added throughout the layout. Opportunities for continued volunteer work abound. Your participation is still needed. Join us to help make this fabulous layout even better.

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