



Erie Railroad Museum

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Location Based Entertainment
Entertainment Technology Center
Carnegie Mellon university

700 Technology Drive
Pittsburgh PA 15219

ETC-LBE@lists.andrew.cmu.edu

Brendan Macdonald
Rich Marmura
Andrew Moore
Beth Semler
Valerie Sofranko
Alyson Szymanski
Evan Tahler

Will Bosley
Ruth Comley

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Erie is railroads. Erie is transportation, General Electric, freight, gauge history, and tradition. Railroading is forever tied to Erie, Pennsylvania. Between land and sea, between commerce and farm, Erie has been a pivotal transportation crossroads ever since her founding.

Located in historic Union Station, the Erie Railroad museum provides a unique look into Erie's locomotive past, present, and future. Featuring interactive exhibits, train excursions, artifacts, and one-of-a-kind lodging, the Erie Railroad museum will become a hub for rail enthusiasts and train romantics alike.



Introduction

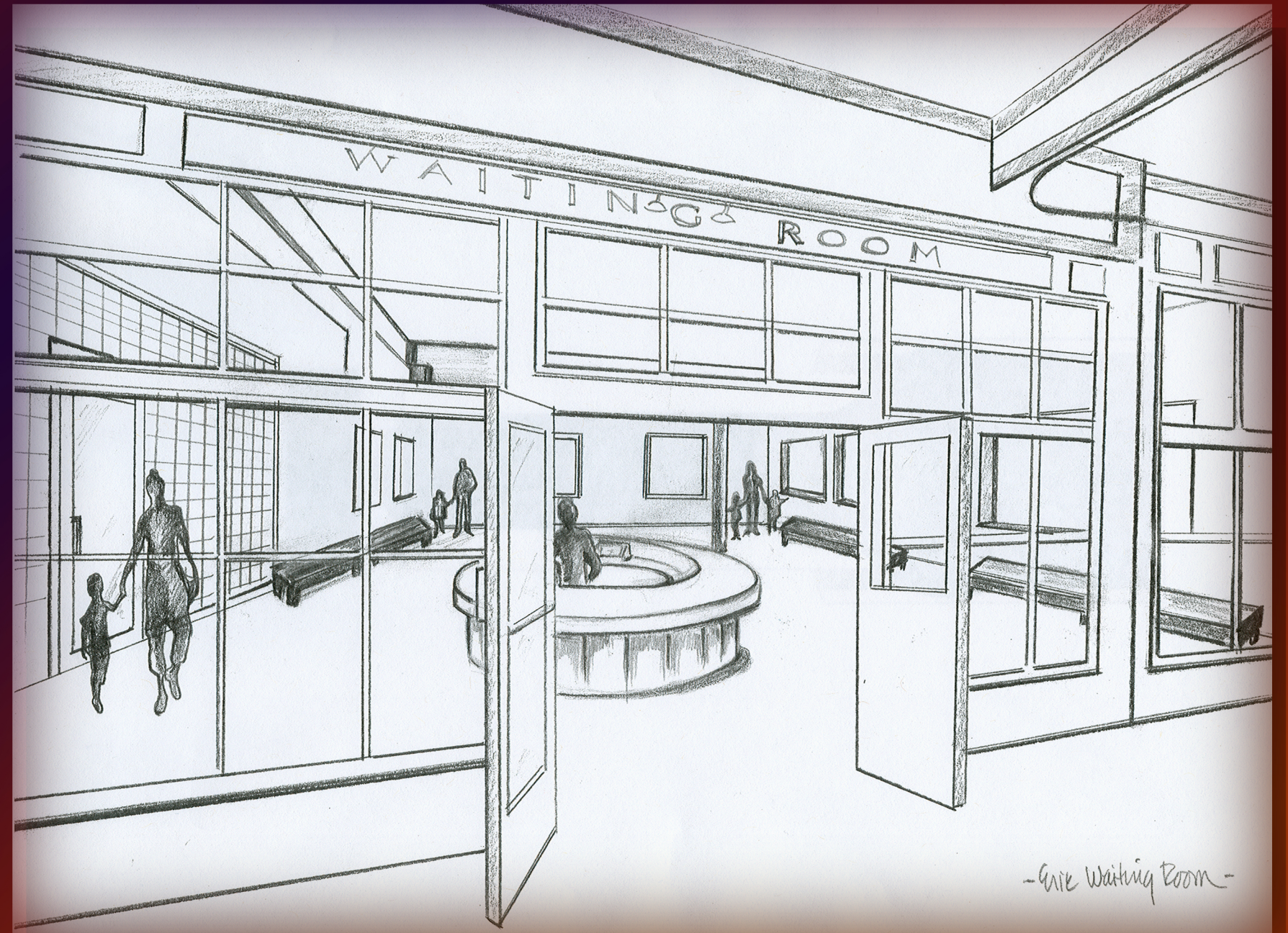
The experience begins the moment the family's car door opens. Behind the parking lot are tracks of rolling stock, the best of many generations. Walking up towards the building is the terminal from where train excursions leave. Today's ride is heading off to explore the Erie wine country, and tomorrow's will take visitors to other nearby railroad attractions.

The bridge from the parking lot to the building is emblazoned with a grand mural. Farther along one discovers an Eisenhower sleeper car where community events are held. The car can be used for purposes such as group functions, guest speakers, town meetings, and elementary school lunch hour during a field trip.



Entering the Experience

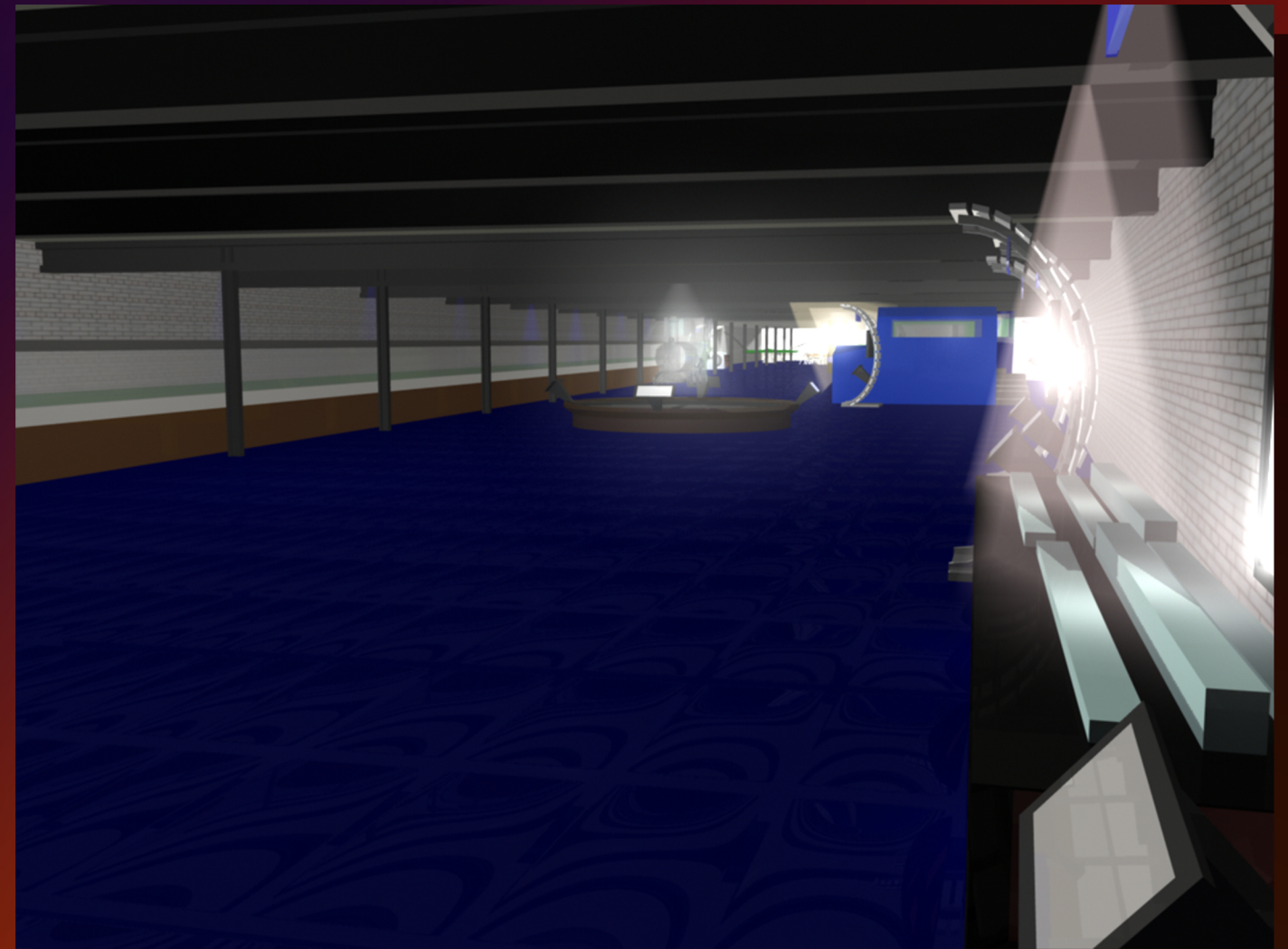
The guests are greeted at the ticket counter by a friendly staff member, who guides them to an information kiosk featuring the city of Erie and other nearby attractions. There is also a small booth offering samples of the fair of local restaurants and the brewery downstairs.



Lobby

Guests enter the heart of Erie's Historic Union Station. Restorations have maintained the gorgeous steel supports and brick walls of the building. However, instead of crowds of travelers, the building is full of guests and attractions.

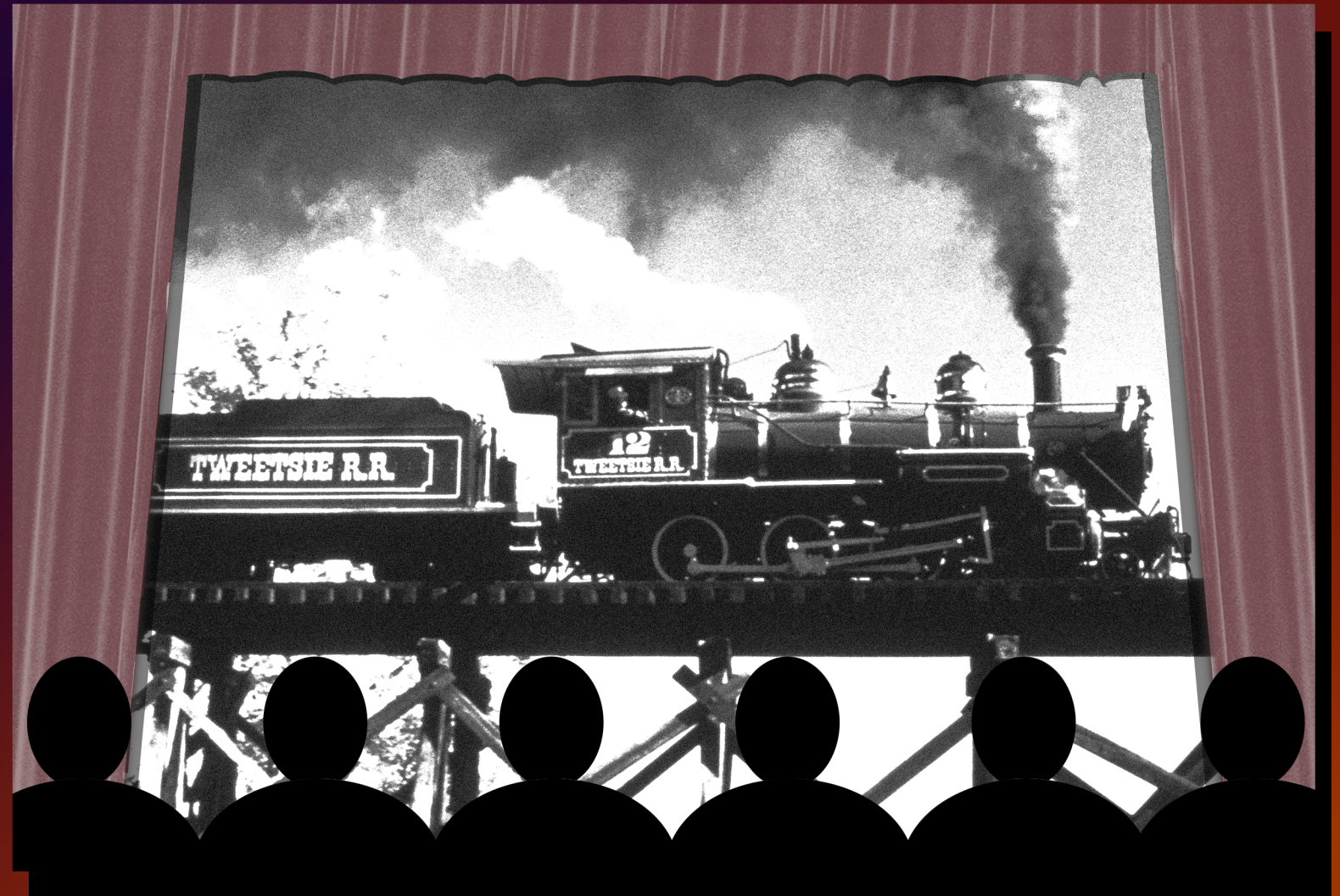
Interactive exhibits pepper the large space, providing intriguing mediums to learn about Erie's importance in railroading. From locomotive cab replicas that take visitors through the country side to a passenger car that travels back in time, there are myriad ways to explore.



Exhibits

Imagine a world without trains. Try to imagine a world that has no locomotives, no box cars, and no lines of rail running off into the sunset. Can you imagine not having any food, any spare parts for your car, or any materials to build your house?

The world without trains is a comedic homage to the educational videos of the 1950s. Even with its humorous style, it still provides a factual look at our nation's dependence on rail freight and travel.



A World Without Trains

Along the right hand wall there is a series of replicated engine cabs, where projected rail workers tell about the evolution of engine efficiency: steam, diesel electric, and more. However, the last cab in the series is a projection on to a Khronos Screen. The screen depicts an engine making huge plumes of polluted smog. When a person interacts with the screen by indenting sections, the screen morphs into the newest, most environmentally friendly GE locomotive. The projection shows the environmental improvements on trains at a mere touch.



Environmentally Friendly

Erie was a site of contention between railroad companies due to gauge differences and the refusal to standardize the track. This exhibit demonstrates a piece of history unique to Erie.

Displayed on curved track, there is information as well as an interactive touch screen that allows users to experiment with different sized gauges. A small video game allows users to move freight from one station to the next across a gauge divide. They must determine the correct cars and tracks, and account for the possibility of having to transfer cargo from one car to another.

Next to the informational exhibit is an example of the area in Erie where the gauge size changed. Each piece of track is labeled with a year so people can swap out pieces of track to see how the gauge sizes changed as history progressed.



Gauge Wars

The controller station is an exhibit where guests have the opportunity to watch professional rail controllers at work. A strong relationship with GE has provided the ability to house some logistical operations in the museum, and guests can see what it takes to keep a real rail network safe and running on time.



Controller Station

This exhibit brings the classic song to life through many different interactions that allow users to understand the conditions, challenges, emotions, and physical hardships that were involved in building the vast railroad system that we rely on today. A few of these many exercises include shoveling coal into a locomotive's engine, hammering spikes into the train tracks, the heat and arid air of working on a chain gang, breaking a locomotive traveling at high velocities, and many more. This exhibit is a chance for all audiences to get a taste of working in the railroad industry.



Working on the Railroad

There is a costume corner where families can immerse themselves in the heyday of railroad culture. Here, children can enjoy themselves while parents can explore the surrounding exhibits within eye-sight of their children because everything is within one, large, open exhibition room.

Furthermore, children can wear their costumes and join the railroading world for the duration of their stay. Museum employees will treat them as part of their world depending on their costume of choice. A bin by the exit acts as a depository for used costumes to be washed for the next day's children.



Costume Area

Want to talk to the train legends of the history books? Well here's the chance. Walk up to the ticket booth and converse with any number of choices of historical figures. Ask them a question and have their ghostly specter appear in the window to answer.

Take a ticket from one of the ghosts and get aboard a train traveling to the ghostly plane. Sit and relax while famous train robberies, historic celebrity travel and other events occur right before your eyes in the seats and train cars next to you.

A pepper's ghost effect projects images of prerecorded film into the very train in which the audience sits. The images appear ghostly but three-dimensional, bringing history to life.



Ghost Legends

The most common form of transportation for Americans is the car. But how does the automobile compare to train transportation?

This exhibit compares train parts to car parts, allowing visitors to experience the difference in size, weight, and function between wheels, pistons, engines, and more. This is a great way to better understand the function of the locomotive in comparison to something most people already understand.

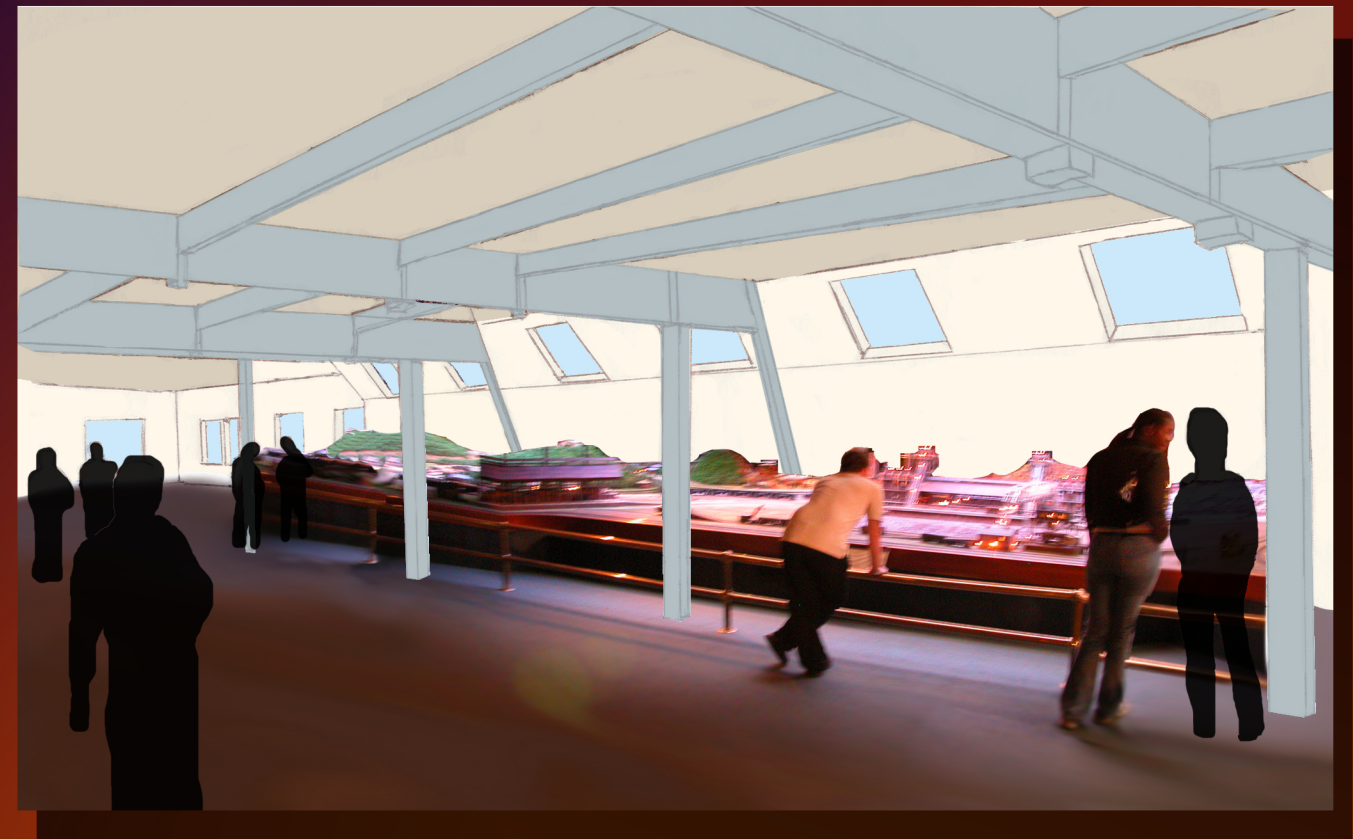


Train versus Automobile

The model train exhibit at the Erie Railroad Museum is unique among model trains. There are multiple trains of different varieties traveling on a very extensive track that circles around the entire exhibition room above the visitors' heads.

This track continues through a tunnel in the wall down to the brewery and pays a visit to its dining area. It then returns to the museum to continue on its path. Part of this path travels through the cafeteria so that visitors can sit and enjoy the miniature world while eating and relaxing.

However the most unique part about this model train exhibit is the experience guests have with the section behind the glass case. . .



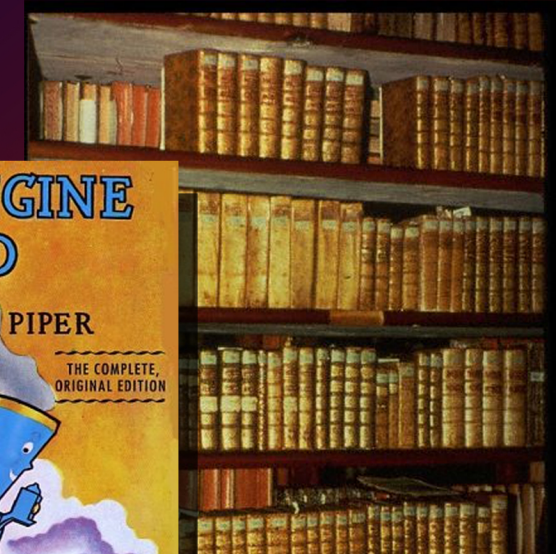
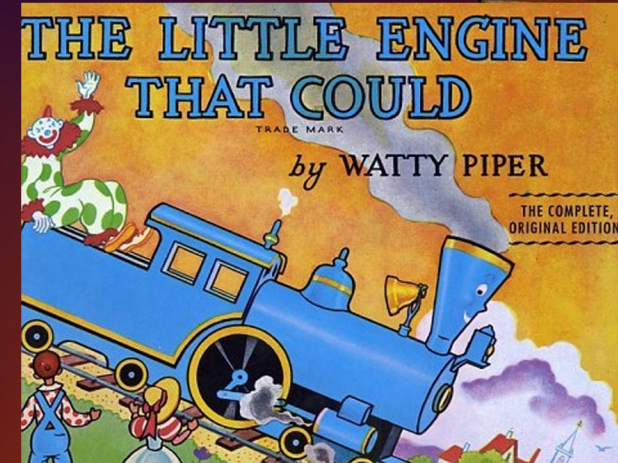
Model Train

All Aboard! The guest creates a schedule for the miniature trains, submitting it to the station master, a computer, for approval. The computer will give permission to the guest to pull the lever which switches the train onto the main line, sending it racing off to the furthest sections of the museum. This interaction allows guests the ability to manage the tracks and routes on a smaller scale.



Model Train Interaction

This exhibit shows the impact of trains on popular culture. Movies, songs, television shows, advertisements, and even books that feature trains will be available for guests to peruse. The goal of the exhibit is to teach people about the impact of trains in our everyday lives, making railroads more relevant and interesting to people.



Pop Culture Library

The BrewErie located within Erie's Union Station has been a local tradition for some time. To foster a crossover audience between the BrewErie and the brand new tribute to Erie Railroad history, several links are established between the two Erie-centric attractions.

In the brewery, there is a model train track that travels through a glass exhibit box in the front lobby with information regarding the museum upstairs.

The cafeteria of the museum gives out small samples of brewry beer, the gift shop sells collectable beer steins, and there is a pamphlet with a map to the brewery on the way out of the museum.

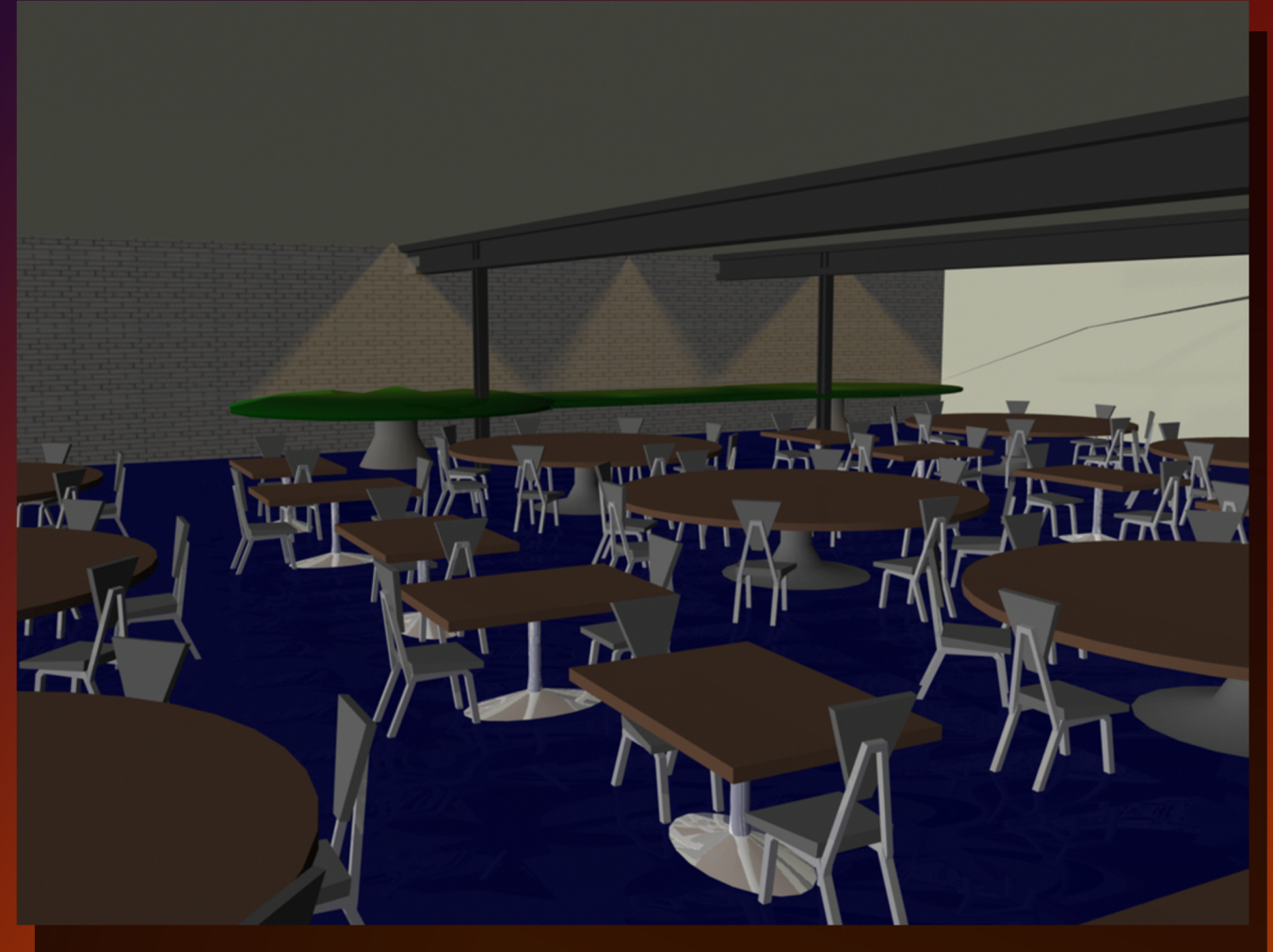


Brewery Relations

Around the border of the cafeteria is a diner counter that can provide all the food a hungry family will need.

Through the middle of the room, in between tables and booths, juts a peninsula housing a section of the model train track from within the exhibition room. A small village prospers on the peninsula as trains glide by while families and train lovers dine.

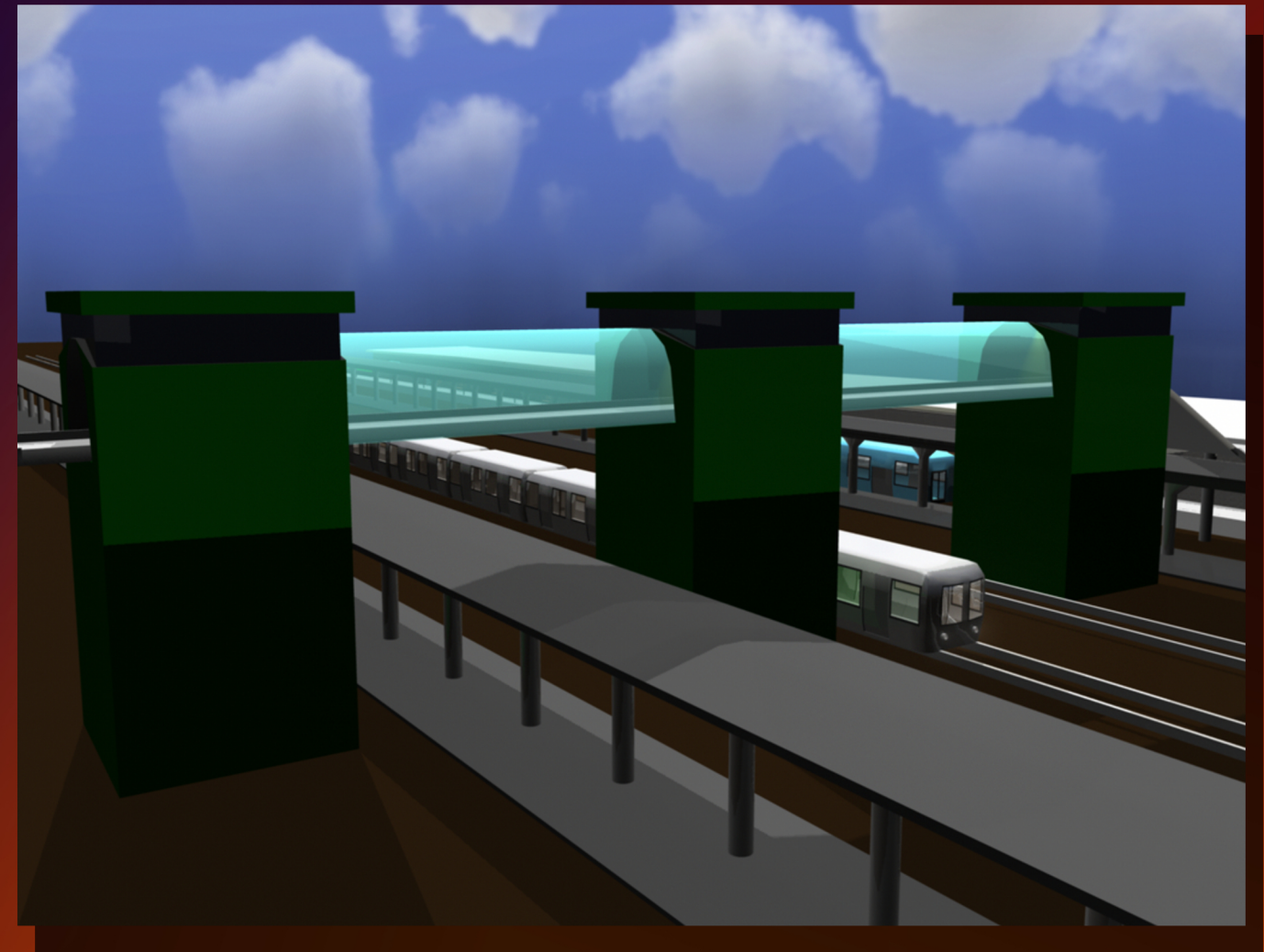
Leaving the cafeteria, there is a gift shop on the way out. The Erie Railroad Museum store offers not only memorabilia of the city and your visit, but is also a full model railroad hobby shop, selling cars and trains of different gauges.



Café and Gift Shop

When visitors leave the museum through the exit they find themselves on a path beside live train tracks. There is a black wrought-iron fence protecting the observers from the live tracks along with lamp posts and benches so passersby can enjoy the trains coming through.

Spanning the live tracks next to the station, there is an inviting walking bridge. Guests can walk out over the tracks and look down through the observation deck's glass floor. People can experience realistic train movement from above. They can take romantic photos, or fantasize about being the reckless adventurers who chase villains along train roofs.

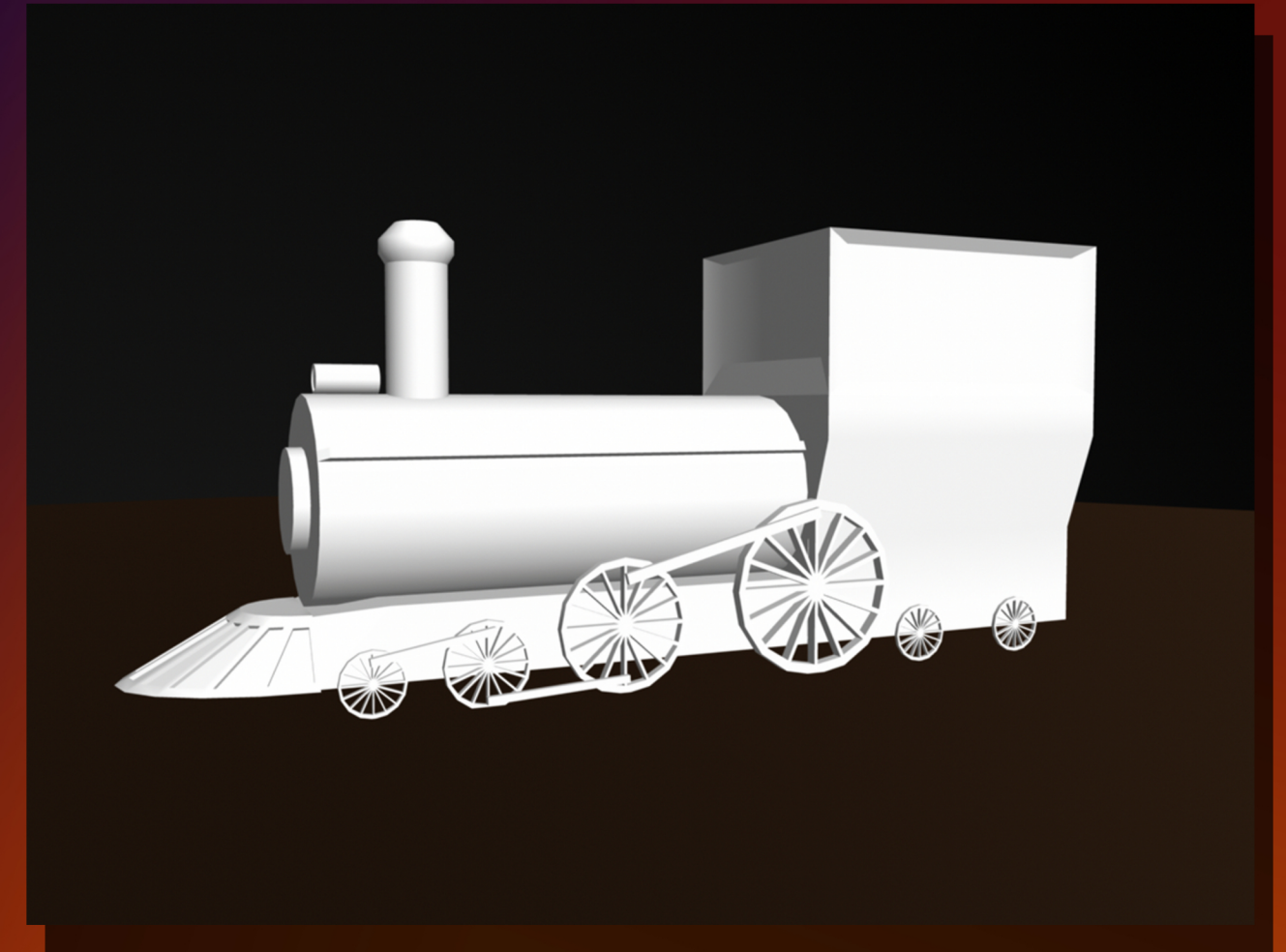


Observation Deck

Located outside the parking lot there is a large model of a locomotive engine. In the daytime it is a mysterious attraction - A train engine painted stark white with no distinguishing markings or features.

At night, however, the attraction is a spectacle of diversity and innovation. A projection displayed onto the train depicts the color and pattern of many different trains from all over the world in sequence.

Plaques along the base of the train provide information about each projection. People can view the information during the day and see the projections at night from the road. This attraction acts as a billboard for the museum, and as a beacon for the train community throughout the world.



Projected Train

Set to the side, near the entrance of the museum is an old, large sleeper car. The interior has been gutted and transformed into an area where events like community fairs, business conferences, meetings, guest lectures and other similar happenings can occur.

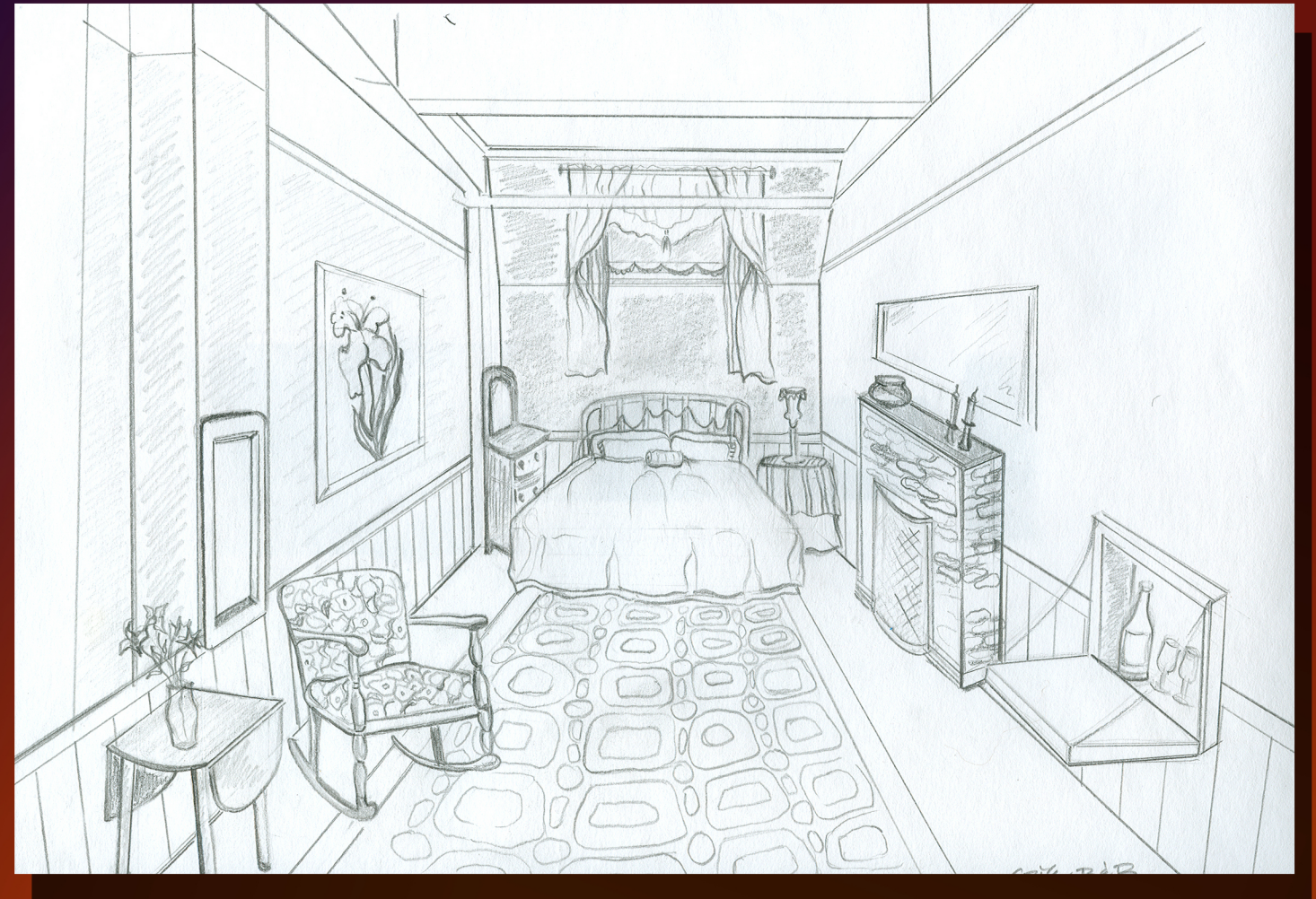
Having this space allows the museum to interact with the community, bringing traveling exhibits or people to provide a temporary attraction for visitors. In addition, the museum becomes a friendly locale to which nearby schools can take full-day field trips.



Community Space

Sleeping on a train is a completely different culture than hotels and bed and breakfasts. Everything is space-saving, efficient, and compartmentalized. However, as most people who have experienced it realize, it is not as luxurious as a penthouse suite in an extravagant hotel.

The station master suites give guests the opportunity to combine these experiences: the amenities of a sleeper car and the comfortability of a hotel. The suites are equipped like the inside of a sleeper car with a Murphy bed, fold-down sink, curtained beds, and other train themed objects. The station master suites are a unique experience that all train fans will want a chance to have.



Station Master Suites

The Erie Railroad Museum will feature multiple train excursions for families and railroad fans alike. Train trips are a great way to explore the railroading community in an engaging and interactive way. There will be a variety of journeys that will be offered on a rotating schedule to encourage repeat visiting. There will also be specialty rides for holidays and special events. The themes will appeal to families, and train fanatics, and run the gamut in between.

In addition, The Erie Railroad Museum will proudly offer a special train that runs between neighboring railroad museums complete with expert commentary to enhance a railroad fan's experience. This allows them to visit all the museums in the area with guided, themed transportation.

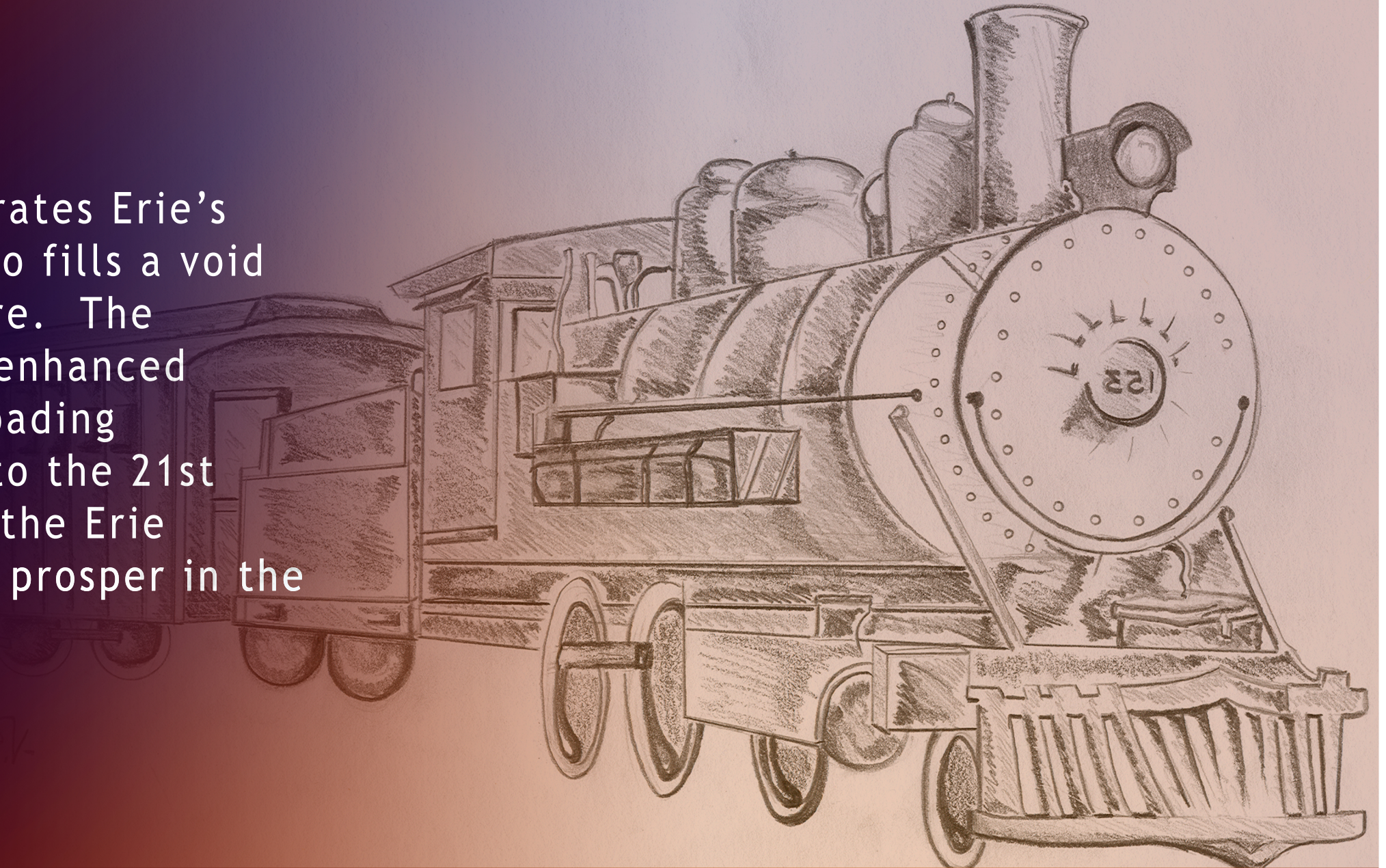


Wine Country
Murder Mystery Dinner Theater
Famous Train Robbery Re-enactments
Journey with Famous Legends
Thomas the Tank Engine

Holiday Specials:
Easter Egg Hunt
Haunted Historic Halloween
White Christmas Journeys

Excursions

The Erie Railroad Museum celebrates Erie's dedication to railroading. It also fills a void within the railroad museum genre. The interactive and technologically enhanced museum experience brings railroading education and entertainment into the 21st century. We are confident that the Erie Railroad Museum will thrive and prosper in the years to come.



Conclusion