



Sun City Radio Control Modelers, from left, Tom Bahe, Dave Levy, Larry Byrn, Bob Bischoff, Dave Rowland and Bob Storbeck.

# Red Poppy Garden Railroad coming to Mulligan's in Sun City

By LINDA DWYER

The City of Georgetown will be memorialized in miniature by the Red Poppy Garden Railroad — an outdoor model railroad that will combine larger G Scale train models and gardening — at Mulligan's in Sun City.

The scale-model diorama of the Georgetown Square is currently being built and will highlight the historic courthouse at its center. It is a fitting 175th anniversary tribute to the city, as well as to the annual Red Poppy Festival.

Sun City Radio Control Modelers member Bob Bischoff initiated the idea of a local garden railroad. Mr. Bischoff recalled his German grandparents returning from visits to the old country with train sets. His interest in model railroads grew over the years.

In Houston, after joining a garden railroad club, he ran a track around his backyard swimming pool. When he retired to Sun City he constructed a route around the his patio.

Mr. Bischoff attended a Denver garden railway convention and toured multiple backyards devoted to the hobby.

"These were 10-, 20-, 30-year projects with incredible scenery and hand crafted buildings," he said.

Mr. Bischoff presented highlights to the Sun City Radio Control Modelers Club president Bob Storbeck suggested a public Sun City garden railway, and the Sun City Community Association gave approval.

The group chose a tract at Mulligan's restaurant because of community familiarity and its central location in Sun City. Mulligan's Owner Nels Johnson was immediately on board. The track will lie behind the eatery with outdoor benches and a golf course view.

Interest in the project grew as more Sun City clubs and individuals joined the effort. Woodworkers are constructing scaled down historic Georgetown buildings. The Garden Club is planning a miniature landscape plan that will be in bloom through the seasons. The Photography Club and Visual Arts Club are working on graphics, and retired architects and electricians have volunteered their professional skills.

The club has broken ground on the first stage of construction. The fully functional G-scale model railroad will sit on a large, raised garden bed that is approximately 45 by 85 feet. Freight and passenger cars will circle a replica of the Georgetown courthouse square on three

different tracks. Two eight-foot tunnels will serve as engine houses when the trains are not active. A trolley that runs through the downtown will have its own engine house.

All funding for the ambitious project is from private donations and sponsorships. The responsibility for operations, security and long term maintenance will be provided by the Radio Control Modelers Club. Homeowner association fees will not be impacted.

Radio Control Modelers Tom Bahe, Dave Levy, Larry Byrn, Bob Bischoff, Dave Rowland and Bob Storbeck installed train tracks inside Wrigley's Pub in Sun City to raise awareness of the project. Mr. Bischoff dons a conductor uniform and answers questions during some peak business hours.

Donation boxes are located onsite, as well as at Mulligan's, where staff wear themed shirts that read, "WE GAVE A TOOT." Local businesses are encouraged to get on track. Mini billboards, benches and box cars will display the logos of sponsors.

Email [Bill@hortonandassoc43@gmail.com](mailto:Bill@hortonandassoc43@gmail.com) or call at 847-778-2872 to make donations.