



Children's Wing



— Photos by Kevin Glackmeyer

Troy University expands Rosa Parks Library and Museum

Troy University cut the ribbon February 17 on the Children's Wing of the Rosa Parks Library and Museum in a ceremony devoted to the memory of the museum's namesake and her devotion to young people.

Several speakers at the opening ceremonies for the wing, including Gov. Bob Riley, U.S. Rep. Artur Davis and Mrs. Johnnie Carr, president of the Montgomery Improvement Association and life-long friend of Mrs. Parks, invoked Mrs. Parks' lessons of tolerance and love

among people of all races.

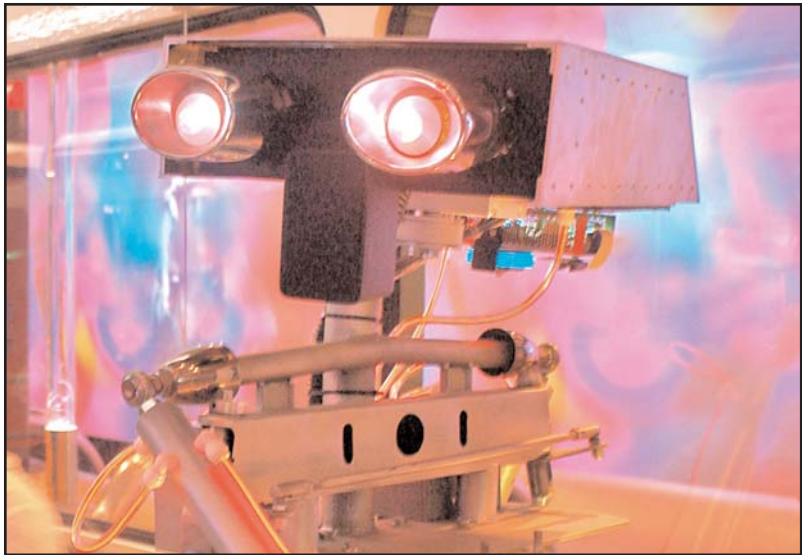
The ceremony was held in the Davis Theatre for the Performing Arts on the Montgomery Campus. The first official tours of the new Children's Wing began promptly after the ceremony ended around noon. Almost 1,000 people attended the ceremony, including 16 members of Mrs. Parks' family.

Gov. Riley said the opening of the Children's Wing is just one of many examples of the progress Alabama has made in race relations in the 50 years since Mrs. Parks defied laws mandating segregation of public transportation and sparking the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

"Today the state of race relations in America is judged by how well we have moved ahead in Alabama," Gov. Riley said. "We are the ones the rest of the world looks to the set the example. I want Alabama to be a leader in race relations."

Dr. Jack Hawkins, Jr., chancellor of Troy University, said the museum is dedicated to the core mission of the university, which is education.

"The Rosa Parks Museum has an important story to tell," Dr. Hawkins said. "The Children's



Above, visitors to the Troy University Rosa Parks Library and Museum's Children's Wing are piloted along their trip back in time aboard the "Cleveland Avenue Time Machine" by Mr. Rivets, a robotic bus driver. Below, Montgomery and Macon county school buses line up outside of the new Children's Wing on opening day. Adjacent page: (top) The "Cleveland Avenue Time Machine," an oversized replica of a 1950s era Montgomery city bus, uses video presentations to highlight several key people and events of the American civil rights movement. (Bottom) Visitors file past "time circuits" as they prepare to board the "Cleveland Avenue Time Machine."

Wing ensures that visitors of all ages may understand that story."

Dr. Cameron Martindale, senior vice chancellor for advancement and external relations for Troy University and chair of the museum's advisory board, said the new wing would share the important lessons of the Civil

Rights Movement in an exciting and engaging setting for children.

"Soon after opening the Rosa Parks Library and Museum, we discovered that children needed background information to prepare them for the full museum experience," Dr. Martindale said. "That

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Mrs. Parks would have been “pleased and happy” with the Children’s Wing because of its emphasis on teaching young people the lessons of history.

*– Mrs. Johnnie Carr, president
Montgomery Improvement
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realization was the beginning of the dream to build a wing for our young people who needed a place of their own – a place where they can learn about the Civil Rights Movement from a youthful, yet historical, perspective. We believe we have created a place in this Children’s Wing where young people from elementary age through high school can learn vital lessons about the events that led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott.”

Mrs. Carr praised Troy University for taking the lead in constructing the museum and the Children’s Wing. She said that Mrs. Parks would have been “pleased and happy” with the new wing because she recognized the importance of teaching young people the lessons of history.

Dr. Belle Wheelan, president of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, also praised the University for stepping up and doing “more than its share” to ensure that the stories, events and people of the Montgomery Bus Boycott are passed along to future generations.

Others participating the ceremony were Mayor Bobby Bright of Montgomery, the Honorable Lamar P. Higgins, Troy University trustee and member of the advisory board of the Rosa Parks Library and Museum; Dr. Carlinda Purcell, superintendent of Montgomery Public Schools; the Rev. Joseph Rembert, pastor of St. Paul AME Church; and, Ms. Georgette Norman, director of the Rosa Parks Library and Museum. Ms. Sheila Jackson of Troy performed the National Anthem, and choirs from Montgomery’s Carver Elementary School and Lanier High School and the Troy University Gospel Choir also performed during the ceremony.

The new wing combines state-of-the-art audio and video animation with history, set inside an oversized replica of the City of Montgomery’s Cleveland Avenue bus, circa 1955. Through a series of video presentations, visitors to the Children’s Wing are transported back in time to several critical events in the American civil rights struggle. In addition to the Cleveland Avenue Time Machine, the Children’s Wing includes an interactive research area where visitors can research historical documents and hear testimonials of those who participated in or have knowledge about the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Kiosks, informational panels and computer stations assist researchers seeking information about the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Civil Rights Movement in America. A Boycott timeline and a legal timeline show visitors how it took both to end bus segregation.

Want to go?

- The Children’s Wing is located adjacent to the existing Rosa Parks Museum on Montgomery Street in downtown Montgomery.
- Cost of attendance is the same as for the Rosa Park Museum (\$3.50 for children 12 and under and \$5.50 for everyone over 12 years old). Discounts are available for individuals who want to purchase admission to both the Rosa Parks Museum and groups.
- Hours of operation are the same as the Rosa Parks Museum (Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Pre-scheduled tours of 50 or more are available on Sunday.)
- Bus parking is available for safe drop-off for school and tour buses.

For more information, contact the museum at (334) 241-8615.