

Historical Society of Dayton Valley Wins Blue Ribbon for *Best Display* in August Nevada Territory Wild West Fair

It seems like only weeks ago we were introduced to the idea of participating in the August 2010 Nevada State Fair, newly titled the "Nevada Territory Wild West Fair." In fact, Rich Crombie, Executive Director of the annual event, came to us last spring and advised that we could have a ten-by-ten square, or several squares, to show off Dayton to those attending.

Within moments of Crombie's presentation, Ruby McFarland was telling everyone, "We can do this!" Mere moments later, Ruby was already doodling ideas on paper of what the Dayton exhibit would include and how it would look. Within weeks, material was on hand, designs were penciled on, and a crew of volunteers was working on turning outlines into details. Nevada's first settlement was going to the State Fair!

Only hours before the annual event opened the exhibit pieces were trucked to the Reno Livestock Events Center for setup in a space ten-feet wide by thirty-feet long. Included in the display were a representation of Sutro Tunnel, the V&T Railroad's #18 "the Dayton," a covered wagon with writing on the tailgate: "Dayton Nevada or Bust," a miner panning for gold, a Pony Express rider on horseback, and a cardboard representation of Marilyn Monroe for the 50th anniversary of the 1960 filming of "The Misfits" in Old Town Dayton.

We knew there would be prizes for the various displays, but none of us expected to win—we did it for the love of Dayton history. But, to our surprise, when the prizes were announced the HSDV booth had won a blue ribbon for the ***Best Booth!***

That really inspired us! Following the fair, a portion of the display was on hand in September for Dayton Valley Days in Old Town, then traveled to Carson City at the end of October to participate in the Nevada Day Parade. That meant adding a background setting to the trailer, thought out and painted by Ruby McFarland (who by then had assured us many times that she was not going to get started on any additional projects such as the fair or Dayton Valley Days...).

So how do we top this? Well, the next idea from Ruby is to add a camel to the display to commemorate the camels housed in Dayton in the 1860s. These were used hauling salt and lumber to the mines and mills of the Comstock after the US Army abandoned their use in desert caravans and auctioned them off. So look for us again in 2011, camel and all!



Some of the 28 volunteers who worked on the HSDV Best Display. Left to right: Gary McElroy, Dagmar Webber, Bob Wallace, Donna McElroy, Vicki Kinney, Lois Wallace, Gene Kinney, Patrick Neylan. Not pictured is the display's designer and instigator, Ruby McFarland. (Photo credit: Morgan Webber)