WaterWorks *at* Arizona Falls

Self-Guided Tour

Introduction

The canals, owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, are managed by SRP. The Arizona Canal provides irrigation and municipal water to City residents. Arizona Falls is a 20-foot drop in canal elevation. WaterWorks at Arizona Falls was designed as a gathering place that recalls the history of the site and allows us to contemplate our use of water in the desert.

Entry

Entry columns are topped with fixtures from the power and water groups of SRP - an insulator with cable and an irrigation discharge collar. The entry pipe was donated by Ameron Steel and Concrete Pipe Company.

The Stoa Deck

The word "stoa" is an ancient Greek word referring to a long portico that is used as a gathering place. The deck concrete was textured with cattails and reeds and then stained. Plans are underway to shade the stoa and use the area for education on SRP's renewable energy program.

The boulders on the stoa deck were retrieved from each of the five SRP dam sites along the Salt River that store water for use by Valley residents.

Open grates reveal the water flowing in two box culverts beneath the stoa deck. The water flow can also be diverted through the bypass and pond to the north.

Poetry sandblasted on the stoa deck was written by Arizona poet and ASU Regents' Professor, Alberto Rios. The poetry was commissioned by SRP.

The trash rake at the east end of the deck was outfitted with plastic teeth to decrease the noise, as debris from the canal water is raked onto a conveyor belt that carries it to a deodorized dumpster.

Hydroelectric Generation

As part of SRP's renewable energy program, the 750 kw hydroelectric generator creates enough clean energy to power approximately 150 homes. Power from the generator runs out through the conduit on the south side of the building and runs beneath the canal to the Falls Substation on its north side. Originally there were two generators at this site.

The turbine housing roof is a cap that can be lifted to remove and service the turbine inside. The artist has designed a shadow device installed in the generator room to project the shadows of three wave patterns on the curved window, whenever the generator is online producing electricity.

Dance Floor

The "dance floor" recalls a period in Arizona Falls history when Ingleside Inn used this area as an attraction and gathering place for its guests. It has been rumored that the guests danced on the previous power platform.

The round grate on the "dance floor" covers the location of the falling water in the north box culvert, which is where one of the previous generators was located.

The ceiling fans are solar powered by panels on the metal canopy over the "dance floor".

Water Room

The waterfall action is produced solely by gravity and good engineering. No pumps are used.

The original gears, shafts, and structural blocks of the 100-year-old electric generating plant can be seen through the curtain of water that spills over the galvanized steel weir. The artists discovered these original gears during the excavation of the site.

To the north of the Water Room, the original 100-year-old wall can be seen behind its new supporting wall.

The drinking fountain bucket and bowl are cast stainless steel, created by the artists.

There are restrooms available close by in Herberger Park.

This project was made possible through many partnerships and we thank all our partners, especially the community for their support.

We hope you enjoy it, safely.

Artists: Lajos Heder and Mags Harries with Landscape Architects: Steve Martino and Allison Colwell
Construction: Achen-Gardner Engineering, LLC
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Maintenance: City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Dept., Phoenix Arts Commission and SRP.

For additional information call the Phoenix Arts Commission at (602) 262-4637.

Photos by Dora Hernandez and Oscar de las Salas