Groundbreaking ceremonies on August 29, 1981, marked both the beginning of museum construction and the culmination of years of effort to gain a new building. Executive Director Joseph W. Snell (left) and President William E. Unrau (center) guided the Belgian draft horses and walking plow provided for the occasion by Howard Johnstone of Maple Hill (right).

By September 28, ground was being leveled so that construction could begin.
Early in 1982, workers from the Douglas Construction Company of Topeka were building forms for the concrete foundation.

By March 1982, the concrete was being poured for the columns to support the roof.
One year after ground was broken the museum was starting to take shape. Here, scaffolding has been erected so that the concrete block wall of the mechanical room can be built.

Inside, workers from the Santa Fe laid century-old rails for the Cyrus K. Holliday early in 1983. Along with two coaches and a tender, the locomotive had to be in place before the gallery could be completed.
Although at first the Cyrus K. Holliday was to be loaded at the Santa Fe shops, officials decided later to tow it to a siding at Tenth and Adams. From there it was transported north to I-70 after engineers determined that the locomotive and truck together were too heavy for some streets. Proceeding west on I-70, the caravan joined the original route at Fairlawn. Earlier the two coaches and the tender had traveled through town on Sixth to Fairlawn.

With the Capitol in the background, the Cyrus K. Holliday awaited its final journey. A 2-8-0 locomotive, the engine was built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works for the Santa Fe in 1880. After 1900 it was converted to a 0-8-0 wheel configuration and later was used in the Argentine yards in Kansas City.

Early on a cold morning in late February 1983, the Cyrus K. Holliday was loaded on a flatbed truck. The Kansas Cartage Company of Kansas City, Kansas, generously donated the cost of the move.
Nearing the museum, the locomotive traveled west on Twenty-first Street.

Motorists on I-70 might have been startled to see the locomotive crossing the Urish Road overpass.

Three hours after it was loaded on the truck the Cyrus K. Holliday arrived at the museum, where a temporary gravel road had been laid.
Finally, the locomotive was maneuvered along temporary track into the building.

The centerpiece of the Society's permanent exhibits, the Cyrus K. Holliday will play a prominent role in interpreting the importance of railroads in the development of Kansas.