New Tracks - Win a Sheet of Custom Decals and Modeling Plans
Attalee Taylor’s small portion of the PRR
Scratch Building Steam Locomotives Pt 5
A Work train that Actually Works!
Art Selby’s Blue Ridge Midland

Madisonville & Jamestown Railroad
What’s on Your Workbench?
Scene Around the Layout
And So Much more...
ITS HAPPENING!

O SCALE NATIONAL CONVENTION

You won't want to miss it!
Model Contest, Vendor Tables, Clinics, Layout Tours, and Ride and Railfan across the Rockies. At the Hyatt Regency in Aurora, Colorado

DENVER COLORADO JUNE 17-20, 2021

www.oscalenational.com
Welcome to the online O Scale Resource magazine. The magazine is presented in an easy to use format. The blue bar above the magazine has commands for previewing all the pages, advancing the pages forward or back, searching to go to a specific page, enlarging pages, printing pages, enlarging the view to full screen, and downloading a copy to your computer.

Front Cover Photo

From the camera of Serge Lebel and his article about building a work train that actually works.
NEW DATES FOR THE 2021 SHOW
October 8-10, 2021

Early Registration $20.00
Registration at the door $25.00
(Both days included)

# Of 8 ft. Tables ____ $50.00 ea/$60 after 7/1/21

☐ Scale vendor  ☐ S Scale vendor  ☐ No preference

Number of add’l registrants ____@ $20 each
$_______

$25 at the door
(Please list below/Use back if needed/Spouse/Children 15 and under free)

Name: ______________________________________
Name: ______________________________________

Please print clearly — Detach and return lower portion with payment

MAILING ADDRESS

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Mail registration form to: 407 East Chippewa St
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Or register and pay online at:

O SCALE MIDWEST.COM OR S SCALE MIDWEST.COM

CONTACT INFO@OSCALEMIDWEST.COM OR CALL 815-584-1577 WITH ANY QUESTIONS

The parties, whose names appear on this registration form, have agreed to hold harmless all of the organizers, sponsors, Model Railroad Resource, LLC, The Wyndham Indianapolis West, and others, single and collectively, for any injury, harm, loss, damage, misadventure, or other inconvenience suffered or sustained as a result of participating in the O&S Scale Midwest Show 2021 or in connection with any activity related to this event, whether of negligence by agents under their employ or otherwise.
From the Publisher’s Desk

We're putting the “modeling” back in Model Railroading!®

Well it’s been just over a year since the world shutdown of 2020. Things are just now getting back to some resemblance of normalcy. First up, show news.

Our O & S Scale Midwest Show (formally the Indy show) has moved dates this year. The new dates are October 8-10, 2021. The hotel came to us asking if we could move and they made it worth our while. The rooms are now $105.00, and we will hold the lower admission of $20 for pre-registration. The fee will be $25 at the door. It’s only a two week move, and we are looking for a good turnout this year. Please go to https://oscalemidwest.com/ and register for both the show and hotel.

The O Scale National Convention is happening, and the registration form and hotel link is online and ready for you to submit at: https://oscalenational.com/. The show, June 17-20, 2021 will be in the Denver area with a lot to offer everyone. Everyone who registers for the O Scale National Convention will have a chance to win a brass Sunset Union Pacific 4-6-6-4, making this just one more reason to head to Denver, Colorado, June 17-20, 2021. Another equally big attraction will be an opportunity to hear from Ed Dickens, the Union Pacific engineer who pulls the throttle on Big Boy #4014. Details on this and the online registration form may be found at www.oscalenational.com.

While last issue was heavy on building, this month we look at more layouts. Attalee Taylor and Art Selby are up this time, as well as an article sent to us by Daryl Blake. I have said this before, but at every layout we go to, I see something I have not seen before and could possibly us on my own layout. Of course, Glenn Guerra is back with part 5 of scratch building steam engines, Serge Lebel talks about work trains and some of his fantastic modifications and, the always entertaining, Ross Dando, in the Backshop and much more. Also, we asked Rosemarie Fischer Quintero, the daughter of Joseph Fischer, custom builder of O Scale model railroad cars, to update her father’s information for the O Scale Kings Hall of Fame page. She did a wonderful write up, and to get the information out to more people, we are proud to publish his biography in this issue.

Part Two of Building the Milwaukee Road EP-3 “Quill” will be back in an upcoming issue as James Schultz got busy with other family projects.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the The O Scale National Convention as well as the O & S Scale Midwest Show.

We really mean it when we say, “We're putting the “modeling” back in Model Railroading!®”

So let us know what you are up to. Any projects large or small, shoot us an email (daniel@modelrailroadresource.com) and let’s talk. Don’t worry if you don’t fancy yourself a great writer, we’ll work with you and help get your thoughts down.

Happy Reading & Happy Modeling,

Amy & Dan Dawdy
Purchases and Sales of Scale Model Trains

Estate and collection liquidations
Consignment Sales
Purchases of new, used, and unwanted equipment
References gladly furnished.

Bill Davis, P.O. Box 1011, Oconomowoc, WI 53066 • (262) 560-1619 • bdavis148@aol.com
Visit my website at americanscalemodels.com for models, detail parts, trucks, and more!
Remember that windmill we showed in the last issue from Mark Andrews of Mark’s Model Works?

We received an Email from Kyle Wyatt about the windmill from Mark’s Model Works after reading The O Scale Resource magazine which also carried the News item.

“Reading through the latest issue, I noted the windmill model from Mark’s Model works of the New Zealand Railways standard design on pg 9. With a bit of research I find this was apparently based closely on the Eclipse Railroad windmill made widely by Fairbanks-Morse in the US. It probably does not require much “Americanizing” to make it very usable from the late 1860s to the early 20th century.”

I found the example from wikipedia.org.

Roger Louis says: I’m running a final (Probably) run of “O” Scale Trucks in 5’ and Proto 48. OCS will do another run, but only if I can get enough reservations to make it worth his time. This is a No Profit to me project!

In 5’ I’m running the following trucks:

41-N
41-ND
41-CUDO
41-HR (Never Produce before)
61-UDO 3 Axle Trucks
63-R 3 Axle Trucks
SP-43 Napoleon Hat Trucks (SP version)
43-R PRR/NYC Napoleon Hat Trucks
242 Heavyweight 3 axle trucks
2410 Heavyweight 3 axle Trucks
In Proto 48 I’m going to produce the following:

41-CUDO
43-R PRR/NYC Napoleon Hat Trucks
41-HR (Never Produced Before)
63-R 3 Axle Trucks
43-R SP Napoleon Hat Trucks
and any other Proto 48 if there is enough demand.

I also am going to FINALLY produce the California Zephyr Passenger Train in “O” Scale in Brass. I approved the final drawings for all the cars back in 2006 but they were never produced! They will exceed the Union Pacific Passenger cars I imported back in the early 1990’s and will also be available with Proto48 trucks.

All my trucks have .145 NMRA wheel sets and Ball Bearing Journals. And don't forget I'm a Soundtraxx Dealer if you need any DCC.

Thank you for your loyalty and for your valuable time. See our ads this this issue and any questions please email or call me at 847.83.5862 wasatchmodelcompany@mac.com

Rod Miller is taking reservations to modify customer provided Max Gray SP 2-6-0 Models to have sprung drivers, a custom ball bearing gearbox, a can motor and more. A limited number of spots are left.

For more info see www.rodmiller.com/sp260.html

Jon Cagle of Southern Car and Foundry called and we had a nice chat. It’s been awhile. John has a beautiful new kit ready, an American Railway Association Standard Boxcar from 1932.

One Piece body, one piece floor casting. Etched ladders, stirrups, brake hanging straps, etc., laser cut running boards, laser cut template for hole drilling and part placement, and laser cut jig to solder and assemble your ladders. Assortment of San Juan and Chooch Ultra Scale injection parts for brake and door hardware, and cast resin parts sheet. The kit also includes two distinct door versions for the hardware and polling pockets.

This car in particular had a Murphy Panel Roof and 4/4 dreadnaught square corner ends. Roads that used this particular version are: MEC, MP, Central of Georgia, Clinchfield, Western Maryland (they had one lot with square corner ends—the other WM cars had rounded corners) and the Union Pacific, which had one. Kit cost is $165.00 plus and shipping, $13.50 for one kit, lower US 48.

Check out his Website for ordering.
Richard Rands of Berkshire Valley Models has another new product! This time it’s a #676 Passenger Train Step Stool that was added to their growing line of station detail parts. A must on every passenger car.

$31.70 with free shipping. Look for matching wing walls coming soon. For more details and ordering go of this product go to https://www.presize.com/products/OscaleAbutmentsPS653.php

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New announcement from Tru-Color Paint.

Paint colors released for the railroad modeler in 1 ($5.69) and 2 ($10.25) oz. size bottles:

TCP-372 RTA Light Blue
TCP-373 Chicago & Eastern Orange
TCP-380 CNJ Blue Comet Blue
TCP-389 Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Orange
TCP-391 Amtral Phase V Blue
TCP-392 Frisco Meteor Blue
TCP-393 ONE Container Pink

Also Released are the following 4.5 oz. Spray Cans ($10.29 Each):

TCP-4017 Gloss Pullman Green
TCP-4018 Gloss Reefer Yellow
TCP-4019 Matte Earth
TCP-4020 Gloss Boxcar Red
TCP-4021 Gloss Engine Black
TCP-4022 Matte Dark Rust
TCP-4023 Matte Roof Brown
TCP-4040 Matte Black

Coming in June:
TCP-4024: Antifouling Red
TCP-4025: Burnt Iron

Check their Website for all their colors.

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Steve Wolcott from Pre-Size Model Specialties is offering a new dressed stone bridge abutment for double-track bridges. Cast in high-quality urethane resin, the bridge-bearing shelf is 7-1/2" wide.

See their Website for these and many other detail parts.

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The O Scale National Convention is happening, and the registration form is online and ready for you to submit.

Everyone who registers for the O Scale National Convention will have a chance to win a brass Sunset Union Pacific 4-6-6-4, making this just one more reason to head to Denver, Colorado, June 17-20, 2021. Details on this and the online registration form may be found at www.oscalenational.com
Another equally big attraction will be an opportunity to hear from Ed Dickens, the Union Pacific engineer who pulls the throttle on Big Boy #4014. Ed will talk about running the largest operating steam locomotive in the world. Convention goers may also select an opportunity to join a custom-designed week of riding the rails of Colorado's leading standard and narrow-gauge trains.

Organizers of the O Scale Convention are anticipating more than 200 vendor tables, a dozen O scale specific clinics, and numerous layout tours and other special events. Among the layouts that will be open for tours are David Stewart's Appalachian & Ohio, Jeff MacDonald's High Plains Route, and Bob Kjelland's Midland Continental. Details on these layouts may be found at the convention website.

"We are working closely with the Hyatt Regency and city, county, and state officials to assure this event will be enjoyable and successful relative to Covid requirements that may remain in place in June." says Bob Kjelland, who is chairing the event. "The motel is excelling in being ready for the event and we look forward to hosting a normal show."

To secure the convention rate of $124 a night, registrants are asked to use the Hyatt Regency's online link https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/DENHY/G-6NSC. Please be aware the rates are good for Thursday night through Sunday night. Anyone planning to arrive earlier or stay longer will need to make separate reservations for those dates. Also, anyone calling the motel to make reservations will be forwarded by the front desk to another number, so be sure to mention you are attending the O Scale Convention to get the low rate.

Table set up will be on Thursday, June 17, and a special event to be hosted by the Colorado Model Railroad Museum in Greeley will be held earlier in the day. Vendor rooms will be open both Friday and Saturday, with the model contest and clinics on Saturday. O scalers are invited to bring a model to display in the "show and tell" room. The separate contest will be judged by experienced modelers with rules and entry form to be posted on the convention website prior to the event. Layout tours will be held on Sunday.

Three convention cars will be offered as limited runs. Two of these cars will be new Atlas 60-foot auto boxcars lettered for the Appalachian & Ohio. Of these, 50 will be in a single-door version and 50 will be in a double-door version with a different paint scheme. Both runs will come in four different car numbers and ten cars in each run will be set up for three-rail operation. These cars will be sold only at the show, with any remaining cars to be available after June 20. The other convention car will be an InterMountain 40-foot steel reefer lettered for Pepper Packing of Denver. This same model was the official convention car when the O Scale National was last held in Denver in 1994. The Pepper Packing car is assembled and equipped with trucks but no couplers. Details and pricing on these cars also may be found on the website.

Registration will be $45, which includes a spouse and children age 16 and under. The table fee will be $55 each (a separate convention registration will be required). Individuals and businesses will receive a free convention registration for every six tables reserved.

An extra cost option will be a Friday night banquet featuring "A Taste of Colorado" and keynote speaker David Stewart, whose presentation will be...
"When life imitates art." David will share the backstory of the origins of the Appalachian & Ohio, its philosophical goals, its first incarnation and the subsequent reality of a real 1:1 A&O in West Virginia, as well as share photos and videos of the art of the hobby as he has developed it. This event will be limited to 50 participants.

Another option for consideration will be hearing from Ed Dickens, who heads up Union Pacific's steam program and is the engineer of Big Boy #4014. This event will be held off site at the nearby Forney Museum, home to a Union Pacific Big Boy that is set up so visitors can enter the cab. Committee member Erik Lindgren will provide a display of breathtaking photos he has taken of Big Boy steaming across Wyoming during this event.

For anyone wanting to take extra time to explore Colorado's great railroads, committee member Michelle Kempema will host a separate event being held in conjunction with the convention. She has professionally designed an exclusive tour for anyone wanting to ride Colorado's standard and narrow-gauge lines. Details on this special event also may be found on the convention website.

“This will be the first major O scale train show for more than a year,” says Kjelland. “This will be the perfect place and time to bring the O scale community together. And, Denver and Colorado offer so much more for families to do. Denver is a destination itself, and the Rocky Mountains are calling.”

The O & S Scale Midwest Show, formerly the Indy Show, has new dates for this year. As you may have heard, the dates for the upcoming O & S Scale Midwest Show have been changed from September 17-19, 2021 to October 8-20, 2021.

The good news is that since this was due to a request from the Wyndham, we were able to renegotiate the sleeping room rate to $105.00 for a savings of $20.00. Also, this is the weekend before Columbus Day, so some people may be able to take advantage of the Monday holiday.

We really need to get a handle on dealers and attendees for this year’s show; therefore, early commitments are needed for both dealers and attendees to make sure the show is a success.

Please go to: https://oscalemidwest.com/ and register on-line or download the form and mail in.

Atlas Model Railroad Company, Inc. is proud to announce the purchase of a variety of tooling in the M.T.H. Premier O Scale Locomotive and Rolling Stock lines from M.T.H. Electric Trains of Columbia, MD.

Rolling stock molds acquired include the 4-Bay Hopper, Coalporter Hopper, PS2CD High Side Hopper, 40' PS1 Box Car, 55' All Door Box Car, 2-Bay Centerflow Hopper, 3-Bay Centerflow Hopper , Steel Caboose , 50' High Cube Box Car , PS2 2-Bay Hopper, 20,000 Gallon Tank Car, 50' Airslide Hopper, Russell Plow, 8000 Gallon Tank Car, Funnel Flow Tank Car, Modern Tank Car, Crane, Crane Tender, 100 Ton Hot Metal Car, Rapid Discharge Hopper, 75' Depressed Flat Car, Scale Test Car, 2-Bay Offset Hopper, Operating Coal and Log Dump Car, Premiere 70' Heavyweight Passenger Cars, Premiere 70' Streamline Passenger Cars and Amfleet Cars.

Locomotive molds include the E6A/B and E8A/B, 44 Tonner, Amtrak P42 Genesis, Dash 9, SD45, F40, U30C, SD70M-2 with SD70Ace, GP38-2, SD70ACe, SD70MAC, GP40, S2, SD40-2, GP30, ES44AC&DC with ES44DC and GEVO ES-44.

In addition, Atlas has also acquired the following accessories from MTH’s Railking Line: Water Column, 22 figure sets, Operating Traffic Light, Motorcycle Pack, Pedestrian Crosswalk, Floodlight Tower, Sanding Tower, Road signs, Telephone Poles and the Operating Modern Crossing Signal.

Atlas has also acquired a license for the MTH Proto-Sound 3 Sound & Control Electronics Boards, which adds realistic sounds to locomotives and also allows control via DCS (Digital Command System).
Part of the license will give Atlas the option to sell DCS components as well.

"MTH has long been an outstanding manufacturer of model trains and we are excited to continue that legacy," said Jarrett Haedrich, COO of Atlas. "We will be working closely with the existing supplier to ensure that the models are produced and delivered in a timely fashion." The first model to be produced was announced Wednesday, March 24th.

M.T.H. Electric Trains was founded in 1980 by Mike Wolf as a mail order train business. Over the years it grew into a full manufacturing business with full lines of O, HO and S scale trains and track. In June 2020, Mike Wolf announced he was retiring and that M.T.H. would be closing in May of 2021.


For more information on this announcement, visit https://shop.atlasrr.com.

Stout Auctions of Indiana is proud to present a one day sale filled with trains with gauges ranging from O scale two rail through On3 and Sn3.

Lots 4000-4104 are highlighted by a narrow-gauge collection which includes On3 and Sn3. There is a large group of new old stock Spectrum rolling stock along with brass locomotives and cars from Pacific Fast Mail, Overland Models, Sunset Models, and more.

Lot 4105-END: One of the most incredible O scale collections that Stout Auctions has had the privilege of working with in recent years. This one owner collection covers everything from classic steam, diesel, and passenger trains, through the most extensive interurban collection we have seen from one owner. This group is highlighted by nearly 200 lots of brass O scale from MTS and Car Works. There is also a large selection of St. Petersburg Tram Collection and other kit manufactures. Also included are trains from Overland, Weaver, Atlas O, 3rd Rail, and others. Truly something to check out.

Highlighted lots from this sale include a scarce Precision Scale Co. Abraham Lincoln Funeral Train set, Atlas O CB&Q California Zephyr A-B-A set with TWENTY TWO cars, Atlas O Western Pacific California Zephyr A-B-A set with eleven cars, 3rd Rail GM Train of Tomorrow Set, Joe Fischer built Pennsylvania Broadway Limited set, Atlas O Rio Grande California Zephyr A-B-A set with eight cars, Precision Scale Co. 1939 Hiawatha set, Overland Models Amtrak Superliner eight car set, 3rd Rail Rock Island Rocket Peoria passenger set, Golden Gate Depot Congressional set, Golden Gate Depot Santa Fe Super Chief set, Precision Scale Southern Crescent Limited Locomotive, Overland Hiawatha, factory new 3rd Rail Norfolk and Western TE-1 Jawn Henry, and so much more.

See their Website for more information.

Sylvan Scale Models will have a new release in their 1/48 boat line up. "White Swan" built in Manitowoc, WI 1922. Sunk in Lake Michigan 1956.

And don’t forget they still have their CNR 1929 Boxcar kit. CNR 1929 Boxcar kit is an accurate representation of the CNR 1929 single sheathed, seven panel, dreadnaught end boxcar. Grab irons, ladders, brake gear, and Sylvan Decals are included. Less trucks and couplers.

Check out my build of this car here.
Joseph Fischer
Custom builder of O Scale model railroad cars

By Rosemarie Fischer Quintero, daughter

Joseph, my father, the oldest of three children, was born August 1915 in Cedarhurst on Long Island, New York to immigrant parents who were from Europe. His father came from Grossaspach, Germany, and his mother from Hlohovec, which was part of Austria-Hungary and now Czechoslovakia. Dad’s father was a carriage builder before immigrating, and had many skills that he passed on down to dad and his brother Chris.

While in his early teens dad, his brother and sister lived with relatives in Europe for about five years and returned to the United States in 1931. It appears around this time that he and his siblings were exposed to the hobby of photography. Dad was an avid nature photographer and gardener. Along with his hobbies of photography and gardening, he and his brother Chris built model trains. We have photos dad took of model trains he and Uncle Chris made, which he identifies as 1936; he would have been 21 years old. In the early 1940’s, dad worked in a hobby store in New York City, and his 1940 draft card lists him as a model railroad car builder.

Dad enlisted in the Navy, but was soon discharged due to his stutter. He continued making models and started building his business. His brother joined the army corps of engineers, which ended his involvement in what would become my father’s business. In 1946, dad formally formed his business, Fischer Railroad Models, and filed with the Town of Hempstead on Long Island. We see him advertising in Model Railroader using his own name in 1947. We recently scanned and catalogued many of the photos he took of models he built. They are not all O Scale; there are many OO Scale and a few HO Scale models. He also made models of freight cars, interurban cars, street cars, and appears to have done some custom painting. While dad made model trains representing many different railroads, the Pennsylvania and New York Central railroads were closest to his heart.

Dad was an avid rail fan, and there are photos and souvenirs from some of the early fan trips. He also visited his sister and her family in California several times and documented his trips through pictures.

A young Joe with one of his cameras.
An early photo from the 1930’s at the Kathryn St residence in Lynbrook, New York. Note the Mantua couplers on the cars. These are HO Scale cars.

Joe and his brother Chris had their own model railroad called the Silver Lake Railroad. Here Joe has posed some of their cars in the back yard for a photo.

Joe was a member of the New York Society of Model Engineers. He took this photo of their layout under construction. Those of you that are familiar with the layout know that one of the scenic spots on the layout was the Delaware water gap. You can see the large mountain in the background, which is where that scene was.
There are also documents in his files from the Pennsylvania Railroad that allowed him access to the large Sunny Side yard to take photos during 1949-1952. He appears to have belonged to the New York Society of Model Engineers and took photos of their layout under construction in 1939.

By the time he married Rosa Huckemeyer in 1956, he was already well established in his business. Over the next ten years, three daughters would be added to their family – Rosemarie, Dorothy and Susan.

Joe and Rosa shortly after they were married. They were visiting the Shoreline Trolley Museum in Branford, Connecticut.

Model Railroader September 1946

Joe used Strathmore board and wood to make his models. The top photo shows a car ready for paint. The bottom photo shows the same car painted.
Dad was doing what he loved, building models right up to the end. He had a massive stroke in June 1996 and passed away in July. He was survived by his wife Rosa, who passed in 2012, and by his three daughters, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

One of Joe’s streamline car models. We would watch him apply the stripes with a very fine paint brush.

Mack Lowry from Cleveland was one of dad’s biggest customers. Mack had a habit of giving his cars serial numbers and it is estimated he had over 700 of dad’s cars.

One of dad’s ads from The Model Railroader magazine May 1947 issue
As a child, one of my greatest pleasures was going to work with dad and watching him build his models – cutting the sides and window openings, creating the roof, making the interior details and soldering various parts. However, when it came time for him to spray paint the cars, no one was allowed anywhere near. Once they were ready for detailing, I was back at it, watching him paint the stripes with a very fine paint brush and apply decals, all done with the steadiest of hands. Later, when he moved his shop to the basement of our home, I would watch from the basement steps, where I had a bird’s eye view. My sisters and my two children have memories along the same lines. My son still talks about sitting on the basement steps watching grandpa create his trains.

Unfortunately, there are few surviving records of customers, and it is not possible to determine everyone he built models for. According to Dan Pantera, who has seen many of dad’s models, Mack Lowery from Cleveland had dad build a lot of models for him. Dan told me that Mack would identify and serialize his models. Mack had over 700 cars built by dad. Dan and Mike Hill were working on a roster, and they estimate that he built around 3,000 models in his life time.

Through the years, dad remained true to his original hand-crafted process. My uncle (mom’s brother) knew quite a bit about dad’s craft, and recently told me he alway thought of dad’s models as “authentic.” Dad had a knack for knowing what detail needed to be used, even the smallest would make a difference, to create an authentic model. He did not deviate or take short cuts. Neither I, nor my family, have ever really thought of dad as a hobbyist; we always considered him an artist, and still do. What an amazing legacy he left.

Belmont Lake State Park, photo by Joseph Fischer, one of his favorite places to visit and photograph.
Cast Resin Parts for O Scale Passenger Cars

Baggage Doors and Vestibule Doors

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We are moving. Check our web site for details
www.stevensonpreservationlines.com

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Berkshire Valley Models

The O Scale Resource May/June 2021
Upper level passenger shelter, section gang shed and MC Tower (scratch built)
Way back in October of 2019, Amy and I made a trip out to the Strasburg O scale show. After the Friday setup, we went to dinner with Rich Yoder, John Dunn and others. After dinner, we went to visit Attalee Taylor and his layout. Attalee’s layout was written up by Brian Scace in the March/April 2015, issue #78, of O Scale Trains.

I was there as a visitor and not doing an article per se, but took some pictures as we all talked. Attalee reached out a few months ago and was wondering if I was going to do a short follow up. Hey, why not?
This is a great example of a large layout in a small room. Measuring 20’1.5” X 12’8” or about 260 sq. feet, it packs a lot of scenery, industry, and trackage without feeling overdone or cramped. We continue to say “you don’t need a real large area for O scale, you just need a plan”. Making good use of the space that you do have is key. You need to start with the lower level or hidden trackage and work up. Likewise, you need to work in the corners early on and work your way out. In most cases, you will not be able to run 60’ or 80’ freight cars or coaches and no high-cubes or tall cars. Motive power will be limited to smaller engines. You find yourself working in stages, and that milestone of the first run around the room can be a long time in coming. This railroad provides the capabilities for continuous running, switching, multiple levels, a yard, and an engine facility.

Attalee has broken or modified many of the O scale guidelines or ‘rules’ to meet his objectives. He has 4.75” vertical clearance, from railhead to the plywood above it, to provide the least amount of grade in the track run available. Even so, he ends up with grades of 2.0 to 2.3%, a lot for O scale. He uses 3.5 horizontal separation between centers on straight sections of parallel track, especially in the yards. Two places on the mainline have 48” minimum radius curves, again limiting the size of engines. Utilizing all available space means a 4 or 5 foot reach into the corners. His lower level is 46” from the floor to provide maximum clearance for the duck under, which puts the upper level at 58”, great for looking at the sides of freight cars vs. the tops. Except in lower level hidden trackage, all track is hand lain code 125 nickel silver rail spiked to white pine ties. 47 turnouts have been hand built in place, all #6 except those in the industrial area, which are #4. All curves have easements and super-elevation.

Let’s just wander around and see many of the sites on this fantastic layout.

*Abandoned Crossover Station*
Upper level section gang shed
Industrial area providing switching opportunities. Dairymen’s League Dairy is on the right.
Above: Peters Coal Wharf (scratch built) named for Ben Peters.
Below: Middle level yard office (scratch built) and upper level freight house.
Ilisa passes M1a.

Caboose track and yard throat.
Selby Milling Co (a modified kit) named for Art Selby. Single stall engine house (a modified Altoona Model Works kit) in background.

Me looking at PRR H36 and H25 open hopper wondering if he will miss any... Actually, the next day at the show I did buy a US Hobbies open hopper to finish off my coal train. Engine servicing facilities and turntable in the background.
Dairymen’s League Dairy profile and isle side of Dairy. I really like the way you can see the small relief from this angle. This shows how you can expand the visual of the layout within a smaller space.

Looking over the dairy, across the industrial area trackage, at the coal wharf.
Two wise men contemplating their next move. Attalee and John Dunn.

Above: Power supply and necessary for every layout is the stash of unbuilt car kits.

Left: Dairy worker keeping the floor clean. Looking thru the dairy out onto the industrial trackage.
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Madisonville & Jamestown Railroad

By Daryl Blake

Trying to design and build an O scale layout to fit in a 17’ x 19’ standard Australian two car garage and still have some semblance of realistic operation is no easy task.

I really wanted my trains to arrive and depart from hidden staging rather than just moving to and fro, but due to my perceived lack of space my idea was to build a switching layout following the planning and operating concepts of well-known modeller and author, Lance Mindheim (www.lancemindheim.com).

Lance’s website and his insightful series of books explain his key theories on how to make a model railroad appear more realistic. Basically, do not over complicate the track plan and operate the layout as closely as possible to the prototype and SLOW DOWN! Lance also promotes “less is more” which means it is not the number of sidings that’s important, but the number of car spots, meaning potentially using less turnouts and track. Having worked as a freight train driver in Australia before retirement in 2014, Lance’s ideas appealed to me greatly as they replicated in a very realistic manner what I did at work each day.

So, I was all set to build a US switching layout (after changing my mind and scales many times over the years) then Covid 19 struck, the city of Melbourne went into lockdown and my local layout operating sessions stopped. By happenstance, I then met another O scaler, Pete Mulvany, who lives in Canada and has a freelance modern era short line layout in his basement.

Pete’s layout is set up for remote operation, so I could play engineer sitting in my loungeroom in Australia 16,500 kilometres (10,250 miles) away from his home using an iPhone, the WiThrottle app and Zoom on my laptop.

So, having been a long-time fan of prototype Canadian and US short line operations, I had now been introduced to this concept in O scale and I LIKED IT. Unfortunately, with the footprint that I had available, it seemed an impossible task for me to build what I now desired. Thankfully, master modeller, editor and publisher Tony Koester and his superb HO scale NKP layout provided the answer. Go double deck young man! After reading Tony’s excellent book, Designing & Building Multi-Deck Model Railroads plus borrowing the basic design of a double deck track plan from 7th Heaven, the Australian Aus7 Modellers Group’s O scale quarterly magazine, I was confident I could build a layout with trains departing and arriving from staging and lots of switching along the way.

And so, the Madisonville & Jamestown Railroad (MJRR) was born.

The MJRR is a fictitious short line set in the Midwest of the USA operating from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s. This is my favourite era before railroads were defaced by mindless graffiti and railroad companies still proudly proclaimed who they were on every car they could splash their paint schemes on.

The MJRR runs north south between interchanges with the Union Pacific (UP) and the Burlington Northern (BN) while serving the rural towns of Madisonville, South Madisonville and Jamestown. The line begins in BN South Staging in a hidden 2 track staging yard, entering the layout at the industrial district of South Madisonville where a food manufacturer, steel products manufacturer, a propane distributor and a cardboard box factory are situated. A short block of street running is also navigated. The line then continues a short distance to arrive in Madisonville proper where a small 6 track stub ended yard allows for cars to be classified, as well as switching of a transload warehouse and the local team track. Madisonville is also where the daily South Madisonville Switch and the Jamestown Turn originate from.
There is also a return commuter service 3 times a day to and from BN South Staging. While MJRR trains do not operate to a clock, the commuter trains do, so crews need to be on their toes and stay out of the way when “the Maddy” is due. A small locomotive depot is also provided for servicing and refueling the MJRR’s locomotives.

For trains to return to BN South Staging or head up to UP North Staging, they need to travel to South Madisonville where the line junctions. Heading north, the grueling 4.8% Benwood Grade starts immediately as trains must power hard in notch 8 to climb out of a steep river valley, around a tight horseshoe curve and into Jamestown. Here a plastic manufacturing plant, a pet food plant and a team track are switched daily by the Jamestown Turn. Just out of town the UP North Staging 3 track visible stub ended yard is reached.

Each morning freight trains depart from UP North and BN South staging and head to Madisonville Yard with cars for industries in the towns along the line. Here, the local switcher goes to work classifying the South Madisonville Switch and the Jamestown Turn, as well as switching local industries. Once made up, the Jamestown Turn, followed by the South Madisonville Switch, head out for the day, returning in the afternoon with outbound cars which are sorted and classified into the evening’s trains headed to the two interchanges. In between all this action the commuter service, “The Maddy”, travels between BN South Staging (and some unnamed large Midwestern city) and Madisonville station. The Maddy is run with a UAC TurboTrain set, one of several purchased very cheaply by the state government from VIA Rail in Canada after they were retired from service instead of being scrapped in 1982 (well that’s my story and I’m sticking to it).
The MJRR rosters mainly second generation EMD and Alco road power, including a GP30 and an F9 and a C420 and C425. The Madisonville switcher is an MP15DC. As the climb out of South Madisonville up to Jamestown and UP North Staging is so arduous on these old girls, MJRR management, being foamers at heart, are considering adding a F9B to the roster to help trains up “the big hill”. Also, in the future, the UP is considering operating a run through grain service from UP North to BN South staging with a switch in Madisonville Yard probably hauled by GP38s or GP40s.

In the real world, the Madisonville & Jamestown Railroad is still under construction, but I am hoping that at some point mid 2021 limited operations will begin. Three 2-man crews, 1 acting as the engineer and the other as the brakeman/conductor, will be rostered to the Madisonville switcher, South Madisonville Switch and the Jamestown Turn. The trains to and from the interchanges will be single man crewed as will the commuter services. The MJRR should provide plenty of action for at least 5 crew members and myself acting as a travelling manager, dispatcher and general mess cleaner upper. Trains on the mainline will run under modified radio dispatched clearance forms. To be honest, the MJRR is basically a Lance Mindheim inspired switching layout with a mainline attached to get to each town and staging. While the space is very tight, I hope the linear nature of my track plan will help disguise the fact that it is a double deck layout that climbs up over itself. Ship It software will provide switch lists so crews can wrangle all the cars into their right spots.

The other members of our remote operating group are keen for me to set up for remote operation so even when COVID-19 is vanquished forever we will still be able to operate the MJRR from all corners of the globe.

I cannot wait.
I would like to thank the following modellers whose work has educated, entertained and inspired me over the years.: Russ Larson and Mike Iczkowski (The Kinnickinnic Railway & Dock Co), Lorell Joiner (The Great Southern), Malcolm Furlow (The San Juan Central), John Olson (The Jerome and Southwestern), David Barrow (The Cat Mountain & Santa Fe), Eric Boorman (The Utah Belt), Bob Boelter (The Great Western), George Hall (Pennsylvania-Reading Sea Shore Lines), Mike Culham (The Great Central Railway), David Stewart (The Appalachian and Ohio), Tony Koester (The Nickel Plate Road St Louis Division), Lance Mindheim (East Rail – Downtown Spur), Pelle Soeborg (Danville and Donner River – The Daneburg Subdivision), Serge Label (CNR Sanmore Sub), Ray Pilgram (Bylong) Neville Rossiter (The Bay Ridge Harbor Railroad), Adrian Gunzberg (Bunbury), and Pete Mulvany (The GHR).
In the last article about this building project, I talked about making the cross heads, guide bars, and cross head hangers. The next logical step would be to finish the valve gear and write about that. I have a lot of it done, but there is a part coming up that will require some close tolerance machining. My shop here in Florida is not equipped as well as my shop in Wisconsin, and I don’t feel comfortable doing that work here in Florida. I want to wait until we get back to Wisconsin for the summer and I have my complete shop at my disposal. So for now I put the valve gear aside and worked on other things. Those other things included the fire box, motor mount, and boilers – that is what we will talk about here.

My goal in these models is to see if I can get the valve motion to work and that includes the eccentrics on the lead driver axle. This will mean that the gear box will need to be on the rear driver axle. The next consideration was, where to put the motor. The boilers are very small and a long skinny motor would probably work, but then how do you get the boiler off to do any service on the drive. I did not want to cut away the bottom of the boiler so I could get it off the motor. The rear of the boiler has a fair diameter and I could get a motor in there. The problem then becomes, how do I get the power to the wheels? The motor will need to be mounted with the motor shaft parallel to the boiler centerline not pointed towards a gear box. I decided that I would put a tower arrangement in with a chain or belt drive to the lower drive shaft. After looking at small tooth belt drive components on the McMaster Carr website, I settled on a 1/8” wide tooth belt for a drive.
The next issue with the drive was how to get at it and how to get it out of the model. What I came up with was a tower arrangement with the motor fastened at the top and the lower drive shaft bearing as part of the tower. This entire unit would be removable from the model and attached to the fire box. That meant the fire box needed to be fairly strong and rigidly mounted to the frame of the locomotive.

As I mentioned, I want to see if I can model all the valve gear. If I am going to do this and want to show this to people, I need to have a complete fire box since people will be looking at the model up close. This then meant I would need to build the fire box with round corners like the prototype. When that was figured out, I moved on to the boilers. We will get into how to form those round corners in this article.

You will see that these old locomotives have what is called a wagon top boiler. Look close at the tapered section of the boiler and you will notice it is flat on the bottom and tapered at the top. This presents some challenges when laying out the part to cut it. There is a drafting method that will generate the shape, but Bryce Sunderlyn showed me a simple way to do it on a model. We will get into that in some detail. An issue I am cautioned about is keeping the center line of the boiler straight when you are soldering the pieces together. We will talk a little about that in this article as well.

One last point before we move on. You will notice I made the boiler out of Nickel Silver. Some people like working with Nickel Silver and do boilers for that reason. This is the first time I have worked extensively with Nickel Silver, and it has some different properties than Brass. It is stronger and stiffer than the 260 and 360 brass alloys we normally work with. Some people make the boilers out of Nickel Silver for the artistic effect. In my case, I wanted to try something. These old boilers were covered in Russia Iron. Kyle Wyatt has a nice description and photos of samples of Russia Iron they found on locomotives in museums on his website: http://historyoftherails.com/tag/russia-iron-is-russian/ Take a look. Notice the metal varies from a dull gray to a blue gray. I would like to get this look by chemically treating the Nickel Silver and painting everything else black. Not sure I can do this, but I want to try and that is why I made the boiler out of Nickel Silver.

Now it is time to get to work, so here we go. As before, I will go to photos with descriptions of what I am doing and why.

Look close at this drawing. Notice the tapered section of the boiler. It is flat at the bottom and tapered at the top. The area around the fire box is also a larger diameter than the front of the boiler.
One of the things I had to do to make the fire box was form the back head and front throat sheet. I do this by bending the brass over a form. In this photo, I am making the form out of 1/4” thick acrylic. You can make this out of any ridged material, I happen to like the acrylic because it is easy to work with and I usually have some around. You can use a hard wood like hard maple and that would work also.

These are the forms and part for a different locomotive, but the shape is the same. The center item is the form. I painted it black and scratched a line on it for reference. The line was the tangent point where the radius of the bend meets the flat surface. For example, if we want a 1/8” radius on the bend we would scratch a line 1/8” from the edge all around. This would be the tangent point. Once you have these lines on the top and side, you file the radius. When, filing you stop at the scribed line. The piece on the left is the back up piece. This holds the brass tight while you bend it over the form. A formed piece is on the right.
To make the part, cut a blank of brass a little larger than the form and a uniform dimension from the form. Anneal the brass by heating it with a torch to a dull red and letting it cool. Now clamp it to the form as shown and tap the edge over with a small hammer. The brass will form pleats. Take it out and anneal it again. Put it back in the form and tap the pleats down gently. Anneal the brass and do it again, eventually all the pleats will be flat. Now work on getting a nice smooth edge. If you are having trouble, just anneal the brass again.

I am making two models at once and I need four fire box sides. They will need a lot of stay bolt impressions and rivet impressions. I thought it would be worth the time to make a template with the impressions laid out. I did this on the mill and I was able to get a very precise pattern. The idea here is I will clamp this template to my work. I modified the rivet punch, as you will see in the next photos, with a long punch. The long punch goes through the holes in the template and punches a rivet or stay bolt impression in my work piece.
To make the simulated rivets and stay bolts on the fire box, I made some punches for the rivet machine. Look close at the punches in the top photo and you will notice that the punch is pointed. This will make a round head rivet like impression. The set in the bottom photo has a blunt punch that will make a flatter wider impression for a stay bolt impression. I made the punches out of drill bits. Drill a hole in a piece of leaded steel with the drill size you want for a punch. Then turn the drill around and glue it in the hole. Cut the hard shank of the drill off with a cut off disk in your motor tool and gently grind the punch to the length you want. Lastly, grind the punch to a point if you need. The wearing surface of your punch will now be hard steel and will hold up longer. The extra length of the punch part will also be used with the punching template which I was making in the previous photo.
To use my punching template, I screwed a blank piece of annealed brass to the template. Now I insert my punch into each hole and emboss a rivet or stay bolt impression. The photo shows the embossed impressions on the soft brass. Annealing the brass is important to get a good impression in the brass. Try a half hard piece and an annealed piece and you will see the difference. Using the template gave me good uniform patterns on the impressions. This is the first time I used a template like this and I think I will be doing more. On a model that has a lot of repeating patterns, the template need only be part of the pattern and the pattern can be repeated by moving the template.

These are some of my fire box sides. On the left I have only the stay bolt pattern done. The center piece is my template. On the right is a piece with both stay bolts and rivets embossed. Note the size difference between the stay bolts and rivets. This was the effect I wanted and it was done by altering the shape of the punch. The one on the right, which is done, will be cut in half to make a left and right fire box side.
Building on my success with the template on the fire box side, I decided to make a template for the back head and throat sheet. This I did by printing the pattern on some paper. I then glued the paper to some brass and drilled out the holes. This is not as precise as laying out the hole pattern using the mill, but it is an easy way for most people and gives good results.

After I cut the template out, this is how I used it. In this photo I am embossing the stay bolt pattern in the throat sheet of the fire box. This worked very well for me. Give it a try if you are not already doing it this way.
This photo shows the motor mount and the sides of the fire box. The angles on the fire box side are to screw the motor mount to. When I soldered the angles to the fire box sides I used 1200 deg hard silver solder. Besides being strong, the angles will not come off during future soldering operations. I would recommend that you get some familiarity with hard silver solder if you do not already have any.

Here is a photo of one of the fire boxes soldered in place on a locomotive model. Notice the pads soldered to the fire box side and then soldered to the locomotive frame. This is how the prototypes were done. The pads keep the fire box from chaffing on the frame. There is also a cap that goes around the frame and bolts to these pads and the side of the fire box. This is what holds the boiler to the frame at the fire box.
In this top view you can see the angles for a shelf that the motor mount is screwed to. Notice that I cut the back head off at the firing deck. I wanted the top of the back head to be removable with the boiler so I could detail the cab interior. I left the bottom of the back head on so the fire box would have a little more strength.

This photo shows the two models and how the motors fit in them. The top of the fire box area has not been installed yet.
This is the part of the boiler I would like to spend some time on. The transition from the small diameter front of the boiler to the larger diameter fire box section is not a cone. The center lines of the two diameters are on the same vertical plane, but not the same horizontal plane. The bottoms of the diameters are on the same horizontal plane as shown in the drawing and the forms in the top photo. When making the form, you need to make sure the vertical center lines of both diameters are vertical. The drawing on the left has the front circle rotated a few degrees. You can see what this will do to the shape of our boiler. We need to mark the center lines on our disks and those need to be the vertical center line. This line will also be used later to line up this section of the boiler with the front section.
To make the disks, I turned them in the lathe like so. This way, I was sure they were the right diameter and that they were round.

This is how I marked the center line. I put the disk in the mill vice and found the center by touching off the face of the vise. With a rod in the chuck, touch one side of the vise and zero your read out. Move to the other side of the vise and note the number on your read out. Divide that by 2 and move the mill back to that number. Now you have the enter line of the disk. Set the read out to zero and put a sharp pointer in the chuck. In this case, I was going to use .040” thick brass for the spacers so I moved over .020” and gently scratched a line with the pointer. I moved the other direction the same amount and scratched a line. You can see the lines in the photo. Next, I will solder my spacer to those lines and the spacer will be the vertical center line of the disks and the vertical plane of the boiler. I did this for all the disks.
This photo shows one completed form and one not put together yet. The black paper will be wrapped around the form.

This is what makes all the form building worth it. Just wrap the form in paper and draw the shape on the paper. When doing this, make sure you mark the bottom of the boiler on the paper and that the edges of the paper are cut to the center line of the boiler. This is important for a good fit later.
When I do this, I generally cut the paper to rough size and then make sure I have a good fit. Then I do the final marking and the final trim on the bottom center line.

I use a heavy paper when I do this and that helps when transferring your template to the metal. I like to use the layout dye because the scribed line is easier to see. In addition, you don’t need to scratch the metal as hard. I use a jewelers saw to cut the metal. Cut close to the line, but not over. We will do a final trim later.
These shapes do not form well in rollers so you will need to do it by hand. Anneal the metal first and gently bend it to shape trying not to put any kinks in it. When you get it to shape, solder a piece of metal across the joint as shown. I then forced the form into the boiler section. This made the boiler section a nice smooth shape. What I am doing here is rubbing the boiler section and form on some wet dry sand paper to square up the boiler section. This worked very well and I was glad I made the form out of brass.

This is the layout for the straight section of the boiler. The two holes on the center line are for mounting the sand dome and bell. The other two holes are for the feed water lines at the side of the boiler. I like to lay these holes out and drill them before I roll the boiler. These points are easy to locate. I would caution about putting other holes in such as hand rail mounts. I think those holes are better located when the boiler is together. The Nickel Silver is harder than brass and you may want to anneal it before rolling.
This is why the seam at the bottom of the boiler is important. If you make sure it is the center plane and bottom of the boiler, you can use the seam to line up the wagon top section of the boiler with the straight section of the boiler. Before I soldered on the wagon top section, I soldered a .010” thick piece of brass on the inside of the straight section of the boiler and left it stick out a little. This gives you a lip to line up the next section on. Once the wagon top section was soldered in place, I removed the brass patch I had holding it together.

The next section of boiler to solder on was the top of the fire box. This would not be a complete cylinder so I soldered some alignment taps to the wagon top section as shown here. Now it was easier to line up the two boiler sections and the joint also has more strength.
The next step after the fire box section was the back head. These boilers are covered in 2 to 3 inches of insulation between the boiler and the wrapper. On these older locomotives, the back head was not insulated. I soldered a .016” shim on the back head so that diameter would match the inside diameter of the fire box section. Then I fitted the back head with the shim and soldered it to the boiler. Now when I detail the back head, it will all come off with the boiler.

Here is a sneak peek at where I am as of April 1, 2021. The other locomotive is about the same. For the next article, we will go through how I made the cab brackets, cabs, and running boards. See you then.
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Art Selby’s
BLUE RIDGE MIDLAND RAILROAD
MOVING APPALACHIAN COAL IN O SCALE

By Daniel Dawdy
Photos by Amy and Dan Dawdy (unless noted)

As most of you already knew, Amy and I went the the October 2020 Strusburg O Scale Show. This was planned and postponed twice because of Covid, but finally we were able to make the trip and the show was on. Art Selby was instrumental in contacting four other modelers in the area, and after working through the logistics, we were able to stop and photograph all five which included, Art’s (of course), Ken Kime, Richard Randall, Brian Scace and Tim Rasinski.

If you missed it, click here to see the video overview of those layouts.

This time we’ll feature the first of those layouts – Art Selby’s Blue Ridge Midland Railroad.

First, a bit about Art. He has been modeling trains a very long time. Me, being in the Midwest, I never knew a lot of the East Coast modelers until the magazine was started. Then we traveled more and got to meet this group. I probably saw them in Chicago over the years, but at the time, me being a buyer and them being a buyer, our paths never really crossed.

It was at our first trip East to the April, 2014 Strasburg O Scale Show that Art introduced himself. The magazine was barely a year old, but he read it and enjoyed it. We bumped into each other at many shows since then, and he invited us to his layout and came up with the idea of hitting the others on the same trip. Again, logistics and Covid were not easy to overcome, but we were able to pull it off, and really had a great time. Let me say that no matter whose layout we visit, no matter how large or small, Amy and I both take away something that we have not seen and/or want to try on our own. I urge you to go to open layouts when you get the chance. You will always take away something you can use on your own.

The following is a description of Art’s railroad that he passed along to us:

“Suppose the Chesapeake & Ohio’s main line across the Eastern Continental Divide and an important secondary Pennsylvania RR. Route toward tidewater. Both depended upon a jointly owned short line to complete their routes. What a place for the rail fan to watch everything from mainline passenger trains to coal drags rolling through spectacular scenery behind an incredible variety of steam and first-generation diesel motive power. That’s the premise of the Blue Ridge Midland’s revision of Eastern trunk-line geography.”

“The BRMRR was designed by John Armstrong, and the design is double deck with point-to-point or continuous operation in a room approximately 36’ x 25’.”
"Geographically, the layout represents a Cumberland Valley bride line serving the Potomac, Cumberland and Susquehanna Valleys in 1950-1960 time frame. The mid-point of the system is Hagerstown, Maryland. (CARROLL VALLEY) The PRR service is a secondary branch line with heavy coal, ore traffic and secondary Passenger service with motive power from Harrisburg. The through mainline service to White Sulphur Springs, WV are over the rails of the WM/C & O. Heavy freight trains are interchanged with the Pennys at Hagerstown, but unlike the PRR, the WM/C&O operates mainline passenger service from all points east and Midwest to White Sulphur Springs. Motive power seen at Hagerstown includes B&O, C&O, N&W, Reading, PRR, ERIE, NYC, and Western Maryland."

"Most of the track work on the PRR branch is Atlas flex track, while the C&O/ WM mainline is hand laid code 148 steel rail. Turnouts range from Roco and Old Pullman to hand laid. Rolling stock is a mix of early Scale Craft to the latest Atlas and Weaver. Controls are standard DC with radio controlled throttles."

"The signal system on the PRR branch has been installed and it is operational, as is the Blue Ridge Midland Coal branch. The signal system for the C&O main line is presently under construction and only 90% operational. Three time saver yards are in various stages of operation. The yard at Ellison is completely operational, as is the yard at Armstrong. The yard at the town of Elmaville is also operational; however, the town is 90% completed and the catenary system has yet to be installed. The layout scenery is approximately 85% complete."

"The track plan for this layout is featured in two Kalmbach publications. “Modeling THE 50’s- The Glory Years of Railroads” and “Modeling Railroads of the 1950’s”.

Before we get into the pictures, I have say that Art was not able to get to the layout, which is in an out building on his property, for many months after the lock downs. So please forgive some of the cobwebs what may pop up in the photos as I never noticed them until after we were home and reviewing them on a large screen. It has happened to all of us, and I should have caught that. So let’s take a look around!

"Atlas PRR SW9 switching at Black Diamond Yard."
Above: Overview of part of the town of Elmaville.
Below: Main street with Jaime’s Pharmacy and upstairs Ball Room.
Above: Main street of Elmaville.  
Below: Employee housing at Kumenytown.
Above: The Elmaville Memorial Garden Park.
Below: C&O K3a # 2327 leading a coal drag into Black Diamond Yard.
Four RS3’s switching at the Armstrong Business area.
Above: Station Platforms at the White Sulfur Springs Station.

Below: Upper level White Sulfur Springs.
Above: HN Cabin at Hawks Nest Junction.
Below: Part of a 28 car refer train led by a Western Maryland A B B A consist at Sunset.
Previous Page: Coaling Tower at Coalmont.
Above: Coalmont with C&O and PRR Hopper cars.
Below: Midway Cabin at three start, with a 2.5% three track grade to the upper level.
Above: Pennsypeek
Below: Keystone view to the lowest point of the layout.
Above: Upper Level of Pennysypeek.

Left: Coal Junction Yards.
Above: Midland City Union Station.
Below: Art and myself, discussing the future plans on the railroad.
THE ERIE F 7’s
and the JOHN ARMSTRONG STORY

The ROCO F9 debuted in 1970 as a low cost engine for two rail O Scale. In June 1976, John wrote an article in Model Railroading Magazine on sure footing these units for better performance. The improved units ran on John’s layout until his death in 2004. John’s family passed them to me and the picture of the ERIE F7 shows the units with their outside third shoes removed. It was a very easy fix to remove the old wheels and replace them with NWSL wheel sets. On John’s Layout, he was using code 172 rail and original wheel sets worked fine. The other two pictures show the units at work on my layout. Photos and text by Art Selby.
Units from John with outside third shoes removed.

ERIE F7's passing MC
Work trains are an essential part of any railroad. They are in service to perform maintenance on the right-of-way, build new projects and pick up derailments. Over the years, I have been very fortunate to operate on several of my fellow modelers’ layouts. Many of them operate in a very prototypical manner and have a good variety of trains and assignments. Still, the one thing that I found to be missing in many operation sessions are work trains.

Work trains in an operation session can bring to the stage a good variety of rolling stock and equipment. These are visually interesting, and it is often (on more modern era layouts) the only chance you get to run a much older generation locomotive, or have a caboose at the tail end.

But above all that eye candy, work trains bring their load of operation challenges: They are usually slow runners as they carry cars that are limited to slower speeds, like a spreader, a depressed flat car or crew cars. They also require block time to perform track maintenance, and often times require the presence of a foreman, so joint work permits need to be issued by the dispatcher. In this article, I will do my best to describe the work trains I will use on my layout and how I modified some cars to get there. Keep in mind that my description and
use of work trains is based on the prototype railroad I work for, and might be very different from other prototype railroads.

**A brief description of various work trains...**

On the prototype railroad I work for, work trains come in 4 different types. These all have a very specific purpose and are scheduled in a specific way. Looking at the steps in track maintenance, the first work train is usually the ditching train. This is the train we will be focusing on in this article. The ditching train is responsible for getting all the supplies and equipment in place for corrections to the road bed. Such corrections include changing a damaged or collapsed culvert, adding more stones or talus to places where erosion is an issue, and filling up areas where the ground is compacting or unstable. It makes more sense to do this first, as it sometimes require cutting and removing a section of track. These trains are usually made up of side dump gondolas, depressed flat cars to carry excavators or other machinery, a road tool car, and a power car. The power car is a flat car that carries a generator for flood lights, and some type of industrial air compressor for the dump cars, as these cars use forced air in their cylinders to activate the dumping mechanism. Back in the day, the dump cars would use the air from the locomotive's air reservoirs, but this is not a common practice as this air is needed for the train brakes and can quickly create a safety issue. The excavators on the depressed flat cars are very useful for the digging and spreading of the materials, but on top of that, they are useful as a lifting device to remove a section of track, or to remove and install new culverts or steel pipes. The road tool car is, in my case, an old baggage car that carries all the smaller tools, flood lights, air hoses, and some basic supplies needed on the job. As a added bonus, a caboose is needed in order to provide a safe place for the conductor as these types of trains often requires changing directions to do the work. This means the rear end of the train must be protected when backing up.

Once the foundation of the road bed is in good shape, it is time to bring in the welded rail train. This train is made up of a series of flat cars equipped with racks that support the long welded rail (usually 1640 feet long). At the rear end of this train is a special car called a rail puller, which will pull the rail from the train, spot it for either a cut (if the rail is longer than needed) or a joint (if the rail is shorter than needed). The rail is then anchored to the ground using chains, and as the train slowly pulls ahead, the rail is gently laid next to the existing rail to be replaced.

The next step is to put this new rail in place. In order to do that, a track gang will be called with special equipment. A lot of times, these jobs are located in isolated areas that are not accessible by road. This is why the third work train in the line up is needed: this one is the mobile camp. Mobile camps are made up of flat cars equipped with living quarters. They can include sleeper cars, a kitchen car, recreation and utility car, and all the cars needed for supplies like fuel, water, propane and power. Tagging along this train will be a few gondolas of supplies for the track gang, like metal pails of rail spikes, tie plates, rail anchors and joint bars. The work crews, protected at each end by a foreman in a hi-rail vehicle, ride their machines on the track to get there, and to get to and from the work area.

Once the rail is replaced, it is now time to do all the tie replacements. In some cases, a way freight will bring gondolas of new ties to a siding nearest the area where they are needed. The track gang with their specialized machinery will take these ties from the gondolas and place them along the right-of-way, for some other equipment to pull out the old ties and slide in the new ones. There is a specific order in which this is performed, by very specific equipment like spike pullers, tie pullers, spikers, tampers and probably others that I don't even know about. This is usually done in a convoy type. I will not go into details about this operation in this article, but you get the idea…

The fourth and last work train involved in this type of operation is the surfacing train. This train is usually made up of ballast hoppers and a spreader. Ballast is dropped in place by the crews via hatches under the cars that can drop ballast to either side of each rail, or to the center of the track. The spreader is then used to loosely spread the ballast so to make the job easier for the ballast regulator and tamper which will run after the work train has moved ahead. The tamper is a machine that will lift the track slightly, and insert vibrating prongs into
the ballast to compact it. So, in short, this is how this operation is performed on my prototype. Therefore, it is no surprise that I wanted to have these trains on my layout to create some operational interest.

On top of modeling work trains to run on the layout, I wanted to go just one step above all this and have live loads that need to be loaded and unloaded, in various spots on the railroad. One such load is of course, ballast and rocks. As a locomotive engineer, I sometimes get called on work trains, and I am always fascinated with the side dump cars. So I was jumping for joy when I found some MTH side dump cars at my favorite on-line hobby shop. My goal was to have cars that I would load up with my radio-controlled excavator at the pit, and then dump the cars in a couple of places on the layout where I could vacuum the rocks after a session and start over again. But my enthusiasm soon cooled down when I realized these were for the 3-rail modelers, and that they required a special section of track to trigger them. Now converting a 3-rail car to 2-rail is no big deal, but that would eliminate the opportunity to have an operating dump car, unless...

**The magic of DCC**

Since the MTH car is equipped with an electrical motor to activate the dumping mechanism, I don’t see why it could not be converted to DCC. All that is needed is to get power from the rails to a decoder, and then wire that decoder to the motor... Very simple, in theory. With this in mind, let's start with the MTH dump cars for the making of this work train.

So the first thing I needed to know is if this motor can operate on the 16 volts 7 amp current I am running my DCC on without frying. Using a variable power supply, I slowly ramped up the voltage and amperage and tested the motor. It works! All I needed now was a small DCC decoder and a way to get the power from the rails. My entire fleet of locos is controlled by ESU decoders, so it just made sense to me to find an ESU decoder that would fit. As it turns out, ESU makes the LokPilot, a very inexpensive, small DCC decoder without sound that can take on this task like a charm. As for power pickup, I will describe it in detail in this article when we get to the conversion of the trucks.

I now had the possibility of having a DCC operated dump car, but I still was not 100% happy. These cars, in my opinion, lacked a lot of details. Most details were molded-on, which is understandable because they are intended for a different market. Also, on my prototype cars, there were a few things that were done differently from the MTH version, so it was now time to get some cosmetics done.

As some of you who have been following my progress know, I am not a rivet counter, and I tend to model things to what I feel is a fair level of detail and accuracy, while making my projects manageable in terms of ease of construction. Since I always build for operation, I do not go too far in super detailing that will make me nervous when others operate my trains. This case is no exception. All the added details in this article are very sturdy and were done to make the car visually pleasing without being an award winning model. So let’s get the cutting knife hot and ready to do some chopping! (Photo 2)
Step 1: Start by removing the 3-rail trucks from the car. You can cut and discard the wires leading to the trucks as these will not be used. At this point, I did not take the entire car apart, but you can go ahead and remove the body from the frame as it will make things more accessible. The body is attached to the frame by pins that serve as hinges also. You will need to push these out so the body and the swinging panel can be separated from the metal frame. If you are going to paint these cars, you should remove the steel plate and other parts from the underside of the car body. Remove the motor and set aside, and discard the small circuit board with the capacitors, as it will not be used again. Take the trucks apart entirely, being careful to save all the small springs from the trucks in a small container. Discard the 3-rail wheels, and the large couplers. (Photo 3)

Step 2: Using a sharp blade, shave off all the molded-on grab irons at both ends of the car body and on the frame. If your prototype does not use the vertical metal posts at the end of the cars (mine did not) you can remove and discard them also. Using 0.030 brass wire, cut and shape the wire to create the correct grab irons. (Photos 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8)

I have included a few photos of the steps and methods I used to make mine, but there is probably more than one good method of doing this; I am using small pliers to flatten the brass in some places, as you will see in the photos, and used my vise to hold and fold the small wire. Drill holes, and glue the new grab irons in place.

Step 3: If you wish to have the cars ride a bit lower on the trucks, you can shave off the bottom of the frame where the trucks are attached. This model does not really have truck bolsters, so it makes it simple to modify the height of the trucks by modifying the frame directly. Use a metal file to do this. This is also a good time to install the new couplers to the frame. Because I knew I would be using all 8 cars as a unit, I decided to use the cheap Atlas couplers I had on hand for the intermediate cars, and used Kadee couplers on the end cars. These were shimmed with some styrene and glued in place with CA cement. This is a matter of personal preference, but once all the cars are painted, weathered and coupled together, the cheap Atlas couplers are not really noticeable. (Photos 9 and 10)
Step 4: At this point, all the cosmetic modifications are done. Unless you see other things that you would like to change (on my prototype, a plate was added on the car sides so I did the same), the body and frame are now ready for the paint shop. If you are modeling a prototype and can find the painted cars, you will save this step. But because I had 8 cars of different paint schemes, and because I wanted to make them into CN cars, I painted all the cars CN boxcar brown. Prior to re-assembling the cars, I weathered the inside of the cars. (Photo 11)
Step 5a: Modifying the trucks... If you have lots of money to spare, you can buy the MTH 2 rail trucks for these cars, but if you prefer to do this on a budget, there is a simple way to do this. Because we will not be using the electrical contact designed by MTH for these cars, you will need to cut off all the extra metal from the truck's cross members. Now I am very fortunate to have a milling machine in my shop, and this is what I used as you can see in the photos, but it can also be done with a Dremel tool. I did one set of trucks this way just to be sure and it works. It will require a bit more filing however. Simply remove the "box" parts from both the upper and lower cross members. Don't worry if this is not perfect, it will not show once the trucks are bolted under the car. (Photos 12, 13 and 14)

Step 5b: Replacing the wheels...
Two options present themselves here. Originally, I was going to make this article about re-profiling 3-rail wheels to a 2-rail profile, but I quickly realized that not all workshops are equipped with a metal lathe, so I am going to use a simpler method of commercial wheels replacement. But just for your personal information, here is what you can do if you have a metal lathe or are thinking of buying one.

The photo (next page) shows the 3-rail wheels I started with, and the same wheels being profiled on the lathe. I am no expert on machining, so all I can tell you is that I kept one wheel at a time on the axle and used the axle to hold the wheel in the chuck of the lathe. I used my arbor press to remove and re-insert the wheels on the axles. I then profiled the wheel on both sides to make it thinner and removed a good portion of the flange. I based my measures on the Intermountain wheel. (Photo 16a)
Using a 3-rail wheel and axle means you will have to create some sort of insulation on one of the wheels to avoid a short. To do this, I placed a short piece of heat shrink tubing insulation on the axle and heated it up so it would stay there (you can put more than one, I think I put 3 on mine, heating them one at a time and adding on). I then drilled one of the wheels slightly larger to fit over the heat shrink tubing, and used some epoxy glue to fix the wheel in place. This also allowed me the proper place to insert a small resistor for the detection system on my layout. As you can see from the photo, this makes for a very nice wheel profile and did not cost me anything except a pleasant afternoon of fun. (Photo 16b and 16c)

If you want to go about it in a simpler way, you can use the Atlas 2 rail conversion wheels, which are 36 inch wheels. These should fit right in the trucks (worse case scenario the axles are too long, just file off the ends a bit). "(Photo 15)"

If you prefer having a 33 inch wheel (this was my choice for the final version), then you can use the Intermountain metal wheels. Photo 16 shows the 33 inch Intermountain wheels (left) and the 36 inch Atlas wheels (right). The only issue with the Intermountain wheels is that the axle is a bit fatter than the original MTH ones, so the wheels will be way too tight in the plastic bushings and will not turn. This can be corrected by sanding off about half the thickness of the exposed plastic bushings. This creates a wider clearance between the two truck side frames and allows the axles to be held in place by the very tip of the pointed ends. Assemble the trucks at this point. (Photo 16)

Step 5c: Power pickup for the DCC decoder... Converting from 3 rail to 2 rail means the power pickup method needs to be modified. Making electrical sweepers on 2 rail trucks is very easy. Using a small piece of flat brass strip, solder a wire to the center of the strip. Make sure the strip is long enough so that once folded it will reach both wheels. Fold the wire so that it can be attached to the top of the truck's cross member while being "spring loaded" between the two wheels of the same side, touching the wheels right on the tread. In order to isolate this pickup strip from the metal of the truck (you have to do this to avoid electrical short), use a small
strip of double-sided tape to mount the strip on, then pour some epoxy glue on top of the brass strip to secure it in place. Do only one side of every truck. Screwing the trucks on the frame with these pickup strips in opposed direction will ensure power pickup from both rails for each car. (Photo 17)

Step 6: It is now time to screw the trucks to the frame of the car. Again, this is a matter of personal preference here, but I decided to go ahead and paint the wheels and the trucks prior to mounting them on the car. This makes for easy access to all the nooks in the side frames. Run the wires through the access slots in the car frame and screw the trucks in place. (Photo 18)

If you feel the gap between the trucks and the frame is still too much (you can't lower the frame on the trucks any more than it already is), you can make a small piece of material glued to the frame in order to hide the underside of the car somewhat. I made mine with cardboard and glued them in place, making sure the wheels could still pivot side to side for the curves. (Photo 19)
Step 7: Now that the trucks are in place, you can install the motor in the frame. Why did I have you remove it in the first place? If you ever operated these cars, you might have noticed the car body will rise and tip to one side to allow for the content to fall out. But with the way the small actuator is designed, the tipping motion will rise to the maximum, then come back down just a little, then rise again before coming back down all the way.

Personally, I did not like that at all, so I decided to modify the actuator. This actuator is in the shape of a small oval plate with a dent, fixed to the motor gear. To correct this motion, I simply made a copy of the actuator without the small dent in it. I made this out of laserboard, but it could also be made from styrene. I used 0.030 thickness so it could be glued to the current actuator without being too tight in the allowed space in the frame. This is not an essential step, but it does make the tipping action look that much better. (Photo 20)

Step 8: Like I mentioned at the beginning of this article, this car is modified for DCC. Using a ESU Lokpilot (ESU part no 59620.), I simply cut off all the wires I did not need. For power pickup, you will need the black and the red wires, and for motor control, the gray and orange ones. The rest can be removed. Using double-sided tape, secure the decoder to the bottom of the frame, then solder the motor and power pickup leads. For DCC address, I used the last 3 digits of each car number. Program and test for proper operation. The car is now ready for the final assembly. Put the car back together and finish up any decaling and weathering as desired. (Photo 21)
Making the train complete...

You now have DCC operating dump cars, so the hard part of this train is now behind you! The rest of the train is really up to you. I will briefly describe the other cars I included in my ditching work train, but again this is all a matter of prototype and desires. (Photo 22)

The power car is, like I mentioned, a simple flat car that carries electrical and pneumatic sources for the train. For this car, I used an old K-Line 50ft flat car. Again, this was a 3 rail car that I had to convert by grinding the bolster to fit an aftermarket truck fitted with Intermountain metal wheels, and Kadee couplers. (Photo 23)

The car itself was lacking in details, so I made some grab irons with brass wire, and steps from brass flat strips. Having the chance to work with these cars on the prototype, the one thing I hated the most was the lack of side ladders to climb on the car, so I made my version of this car with side ladders. (Photo 24)
I did not like the look of the plastic deck full of holes for (probably) accessories, so I tried to sand it down and made a real wood deck instead. I painted the car prior to installing the deck so I would be able to stain the deck and keep that wood look to it. (Photo 25)

As for the equipment on top, I found a diecast 1/50 Caterpillar generator, which I took apart and removed the wheels and frame from it. I also wanted to be able to see the motor inside, so I removed one of the side panels and made a see-thru grille instead. (Photo 26)

The air compressor was more complicated. Since I wanted a modern looking compressor and could not find any, I had to design one based on photos and 3D print in on my Elegoo Mars. This, combined with a few lasered parts and some paint and decals, made for a very convincing model. (See prototype model Photo 27, unknown photographer, and Photos 28 and 28a next page)
The depressed center flat car is a MTH model that I modified. I was not able to find a model that looked like what I wanted, so I decided to use the MTH base model and make it into a more modern looking car (again, not based on any prototype). (Photos 29 and 30)

This model has a lot of issues in my opinion (car is too short, has very ancient brake wheel configuration, lacks details and runs way too high off the ground), and I knew I would have to modify it if I wanted to have a model that would be better suited for my needs. To do this, I started by cutting the car in half. This was simply done with a razor saw blade. This was also a good time to remove the "cylinder" that is located right in the middle of the car body, for no apparent reason other than MTH not having shorter screws on hand to attach the truck bolster plate under the car. I then sanded the entire body to make it smoother and ready for the new add-on parts. (Photos 31 and 32 on next page)
I then designed and cut some styrene extensions to the car body, using 0.040 styrene. The extension made the car body 2 inches longer. I also designed a more modern looking steel deck and new side plates. I clamped the car deck to my bench top and glued the extensions and sides in place. (Photos 33, 34 and 35)

I then glued on the rest of the new steel deck, the cover plates to hide the holes for the truck bolster screws, and made a new brake wheel stand, with a few detail parts. (Photos 36 and 37)
The one thing that you will notice right away when looking at my finished version of this car is the fact that it rides much closer to the ground than the original model. To do this, I had to modify the truck bolster metal plate. This plate has a folded lip all around it to create a spacing between the plate and the car body. (Photo 38)

Using a grinder, I removed this metal lip in order to have a flat metal plate. This is also a good time to start thinking about body mounting a Kadee no. 803 metal coupler. For this, I made a small wood block that I glued and painted. (Photos 39 and 40 next page)
The truck will also have to be modified, in the same way we modified the trucks on the dump cars. Here, I just removed the long metal bracket that is used to hold the 3-rail coupler in place. The trucks can now be painted and weathered, and fitted with Intermountain or Atlas wheels. (Photos 41 and 42)

The last order of business on this car is to add some side body details. For this, I used some 0.040 x 0.040 styrene strips that I cut and glued to the body, based on some prototype photos I found on the Internet. I then added a bottom sill, using some 0.020 x 0.050 styrene strips. This very simple add-on made a world of difference in the looks of this car. (Photos 43 and 44)
Placing the trucks under the car is simply a matter of shortening the screws by filing the original MTH screw to fit in place without punching through the deck. Since the plate was modified, the holes in the plate and the car body no longer align, so the best thing to do here is to file the hole to make an opening so it is a slot instead. Test fit the Kadee couplers by screwing them in the block of wood and making the final height adjustments by sanding the block if needed. (Photos 45, 46 and 47)

This car is now ready for the paint and decals of your choice. I went with a CN version that does not exist. In my fantasy world, this is a former QTTX car that was modified by CN and painted for their own use. It does not make any sense, but it looks good! (Photo 48 next page)
For the load, I purchased a diecast excavator (found one that was already weathered) which completed this car to perfection. To be closer to prototype, this excavator would need to be chained to the car when it is being moved around, but since I wanted to have the option to leave the excavator track side at the work site, I will have to overlook this detail. (Photo 48)
The road tool car is an MTH baggage car that was also converted to 2 rail, detailed, painted and weathered. I was told that on most railroads today, all the tools and supplies are now carried in a truck trailer, but I really wanted the look and feel of this type of car that clearly defines a work train. (Photo 49)

![Image 49](image49.png)

This is the car I started with. It is an MTH baggage car in 3-rail version. The first thing I did was to take the car apart and remove the skirting from the body's ends on both sides. (Photos 50 and 51)

![Image 50](image50.png)

![Image 51](image51.png)

Next, I modified the roof and ends, adding some details for visual interest. I also designed and 3D printed a smoke stack for the oil burner inside the car, since this car is a rolling workshop as well as a tool shack. I also printed a roof vent and an electrical connection box. The bulky diaphragms were cut to make them look more like a door seal. No serious modifications to the trucks this time, I used Atlas wheels that fitted right in. (Photos 52, 53 and 53a next page)
The end result is a good looking equipment car that was simple to make and gives the train that feel of a special train you don't see every day.

Head-end power on this type of train for my Sanmore Subdivision will be old SD units. Again speaking from experience, the SD 40-2 is one of the best locomotive to have on a work train. It has lower, more predictable power with faster throttle response. These old cabs are not as comfortable as the SD70Ace's but the visibility is so much better-suited for the task at hand! At the tail end will be a standard Point-St-Charles caboose.

As for operation of this work train, the crews will have to make the train up in the yard in Oak Ridge and go to the reclaim track to load up on steel pipes and to pick up the excavator. They will then travel up the main line all the way to Allensburg and take the spur to the pit, use the radio-controlled excavator and load up with the proper grade of rocks and gravels as per their work order. They will then travel further up the main line again and when they reach the work site, take the proper authorities with the dispatcher and the foreman. They will then spot and unload the equipment and the materials at the properly staked locations, and then return empty to the home yard. All of this will be done while other trains compete for the main line and try to make it to their destination on time…
This article only covers the building of a few cars on a single work train. As you can see, work trains are very interesting to model and to operate. Three more work trains will be built for my layout eventually. I see a lot more scratchbuilding in the other trains to come. Perhaps I will enjoy it so much (as will my operators) that I will decide to model the car repair work train, and the wrecking crew with the big 250 ton crane... Who knows how far this will take me? But for now, I am called on a work train to do some ditching work, so I will see you later!

Check out Serge Lebel’s video on YouTube titled CN work train promo on the Sanmore Subdivision and see the dumpcars in action!
"New Tracks" Virtual Train shows Canceled

Regrettably I had to cancel the "New tracks" Virtual March 20 & 21, 2021 Train Show and all future Train shows, at least for now. Unfortunately we just do not have the technical capabilities needed to produce the Virtual Train shows.

I apologize for having to cancel the Virtual Train shows, but after careful consideration felt this was the right decision. If you have Zoom and/or YouTube technical capabilities and want to volunteer your help, please email me at jimkellow@oscaleresource.com. Your help will be greatly appreciated and may enable us to resume our "New Tracks" Train Shows. Thanks to all of you, volunteers, sponsors, vendors, and viewers who supported our efforts thus far.

Announcement of a "New Tracks " Meetup Personal Mentor Segment.

We have started a new model building segment with your own personal mentor segment on our "New Tracks" Meetups. We call it BUILD ALONG. I hope it will encourage more modelers to build models and maybe even get involved in the NMRA Achievement Program.

A very talented model builder is going to build a kit in short segments each week until the model is finished. You will find out the tools, paints, glues he/she uses to build the kit, tips to help you avoid errors, and correct any mistakes you might make in building the model. Best of all, you can talk to the modeler and ask questions.
You will be able to watch him/her build the kit in small segments, learn their techniques first hand, and talk to them as they build the model. Building your kit at the same time allows you to build along with them. I believe this effort will, in effect, provide you with a personal mentor in helping you build the kit.

We have six model builders, and kit manufacturers lined up to begin our program. We welcome your comments and recommendations of other modelers and manufacturers we should ask to be a part of this effort, as well as ideas to improve the segments. Contact me at jimkellow@oscaleresource.com

1. Modeler Greg Cassidy built the Conowingo Models HO-scale Grey Street House-Company House Version, starting February 24, 2021. The kit is also available in O Scale.

   Greg was joined by kit designer Chris Coarse and lighting guru Geoff Bunza. Go to https://conowingomodels.com/ to order the kit so you can Build Along with Greg.

   Greg Cassidy has built many different variations of this kit and you can easily make it into your own version, to fit into your railroad.

   All segments are videoed and posted on our New Tracks Modeling YouTube channel. The first segment was broadcast on our February 27 Meetup. A Special segment of MY BUILD for modelers who built the Kit with Greg was held on the March 31 "New Tracks" Meetup and is available on our YouTube Channel

2. Clark Kooning started building the "First Timer Bar" by Downtown Deco kit on March 27. All Build Along Segments will be recorded and posted on our YouTube New Tracks Modeling channel.

   Clark says: This little kit is a great kit by Downtown Deco, which is owned by Randy Peacock. This kit is not a laser kit, it is a Hydrocal kit. Hydrocal is a plaster which has been poured into a mold which was made from a highly detailed master carving. I will walk you thru the steps to build a great starter kit called First Timer Bar. We will explore sealing plaster, basic assembly, learn to paint brick and other masonry items

   There is no time like the first time for anything & that includes building your first Hydrocal kit! Designed with rank beginners in mind, this kit features simple construction but amazing detail. The instructions for this one was specifically written for beginners. Try one, you'll like it! 1 1/2” x 4”. To build along with me go to the Downtown Deco Website at https://www.downtowndeco.com or Email Randy at downtowndeco@montana.com
N scale DD2017 First Timer Bar $24.95
HO scale DD1053 First Timer Bar $29.95
O scale DD52 First Timer Bar $39.95

As a special for those doing the BUILD ALONG, Randy has offered to send extra walls and another set of signs for a different little business so really you’re getting 2 kits for 1 price!

A Special My Build for modelers who build Along with Clark will be held on the April 21 "New Tracks" Meetup.

Required Tools Participants Must Provide:

This is a suggested list of tools that may be required to participate fully in the hands-on portion of our program. In order to allow you to fully take part in building of models, you are strongly suggested to have all tools listed. You, however, may not use them in the program, but will have them for future building. Most of the tools listed can be found at your local hobby shop, hardware store or craft store. Please note: bring any additional tools you usually like to use also, and you may not use all tools listed. If you have any problems with the description of items listed please contact Clark Kooning, MMR, via e-mail at Clark.Kooning@oscalereresource.com.

Glues Required:
● Yellow Carpenter’s Glue
● Elmer’s White Glue
● 5-minute Epoxy (optional)

Tool List:
● Sandpaper - 80 and 120 grit
● Hobby Knife - Xacto #11 blade
● Emery boards or sanding sticks
● 1/8 Drill bit - Pin vise for bit
● 000 Steel wool
● Assorted flat paint brushes including 1 - 1 inch wide brush
● You will need about 1/8 +/- of a cup of white Hydrocal powder…If you don’t have any borrow some from a friend…… Only White Hydrocal will do, if you don’t have any or can not get any, we will tackle the issue another way

Acrylic Paint Suggestion List: Cheap acrylic craft paint. List suggestion - only choose whatever is available to you. Apple Barrel, Craftsmart and CermaCote are similar brands & have similar colors.
● Folk Art Terra Cotta or a similar orange color
● Brown, Raw Umber, Burnt Umber, Raw Sienna
● Flat black, Flat White, Flat Red
● Light grey or similar for concrete color (Woodland Scenics concrete that works well too)

Spray Can Paint:
● Krylon Matt Clear

Or any other tools you usually use…Optional tools: Optivisor, extra work light, these are handy tools which you could use in our clinics, but it is not essential you buy them just for this project. Please note an updated tool list may be asked for during the build. To order the kit for your scale online at https://www.downtowndeco.com or Email Randy at downtowndeco@montana.com
3. Starting on April 17th, 2021 Bob Farquhar, a very talented modeler, is building the Blair Line "General Store" kit, with kit designer Dale Rush. This kit is available in N, HO, and O scale. A 25% discount is available from Blair Line for this BUILD ALONE project. A special My Build segment for those modelers who Built Along with Bob will be held on the May 29 "New Tracks" Meetup.

Bob presented the first segment on this BUILD ALONG February 20, 2021 which discussed the tools, paints, and glues needed to build the model. This segment is available for viewing on our New Tracks Modeling YouTube channel.

Go to [http://blairline.com/](http://blairline.com/) to order the kit in N, HO, or O scale, and be sure to use the code **newtracks** to receive a 25% discount and free US shipping. Order the kit so you can BUILD ALONG with your mentor Bob Farquhar at [http://blairline.com/](http://blairline.com/).

4. Gaylord Gill and Randy Bosscher, both experienced S scale model builders, are building a model using “The 1-Kit” by Bar Mills Models. The kit is available in N, HO, S, and O scales. A 25% discount is available from the Kit manufacturer for this BUILD ALONE project. Order the kit at [Bar Mills](http://blairline.com/) so you can BUILD ALONG with your mentors Gaylord Gill and Randy Bosscher. Remember to use the the special discount code **NTM1KIT** to get the 25% discount.

The kit is available in N/HO/S/O scales. Initial introduction of the project was on February 27 and the first construction session will be April 17, 2021. You can view a video of the first segment on our New tracks Modeling YouTube channel. To order, go to [barmillsmodels.com/product/the-1-kit-n-ho-s-o/](http://barmillsmodels.com/product/the-1-kit-n-ho-s-o/) to order the kit in your scale. Hope you BUILD ALONG with Gaylord and Randy because this may become the first model you can say you scratch-built! A special My Build segment for those modelers who Built Along will be held on the May 29 "New Tracks" Meetup. A raffle will also be held for modelers showing the models they build in the Build Along. The winner drawn in the raffle will receive a $25 gift certificate from Bar Mills that can be used for a future purchase.

5. Hunterline BUILD ALONG with Rick and Maureen Hunter building and weathering their Hunterline kit of a 30' King post Bridge. The kit is available in N, HO, S, and O scale. They will be building the S Scale version.

This BUILD ALONG will be presented in eight (8) weekly, 30 minute segments starting on our "New Tracks" Meetup May 22, 2021 at 7pm Eastern Time.

Join Maureen and Rick from Hunterline, as they take you through, step by step instructions, to build your own Hunterline 30’ King Post Truss Bridge in your scale (N, HO, S, O, including all the Narrow Gauge scales).
Skills to learn: read templates and instructions, distressing basswood, staining and gluing techniques, assembly, drilling for rods, NBW installing, finish weathering techniques. This is a beginner to intermediate difficulty. Old pros can learn a few things too!

The price includes the kit and two bottles (8oz) of Hunterline Weathering Mix – a base color, and a highlight color. The highlight color Rick and Maureen recommend is their Creosote Black. They will advise you on the base coat if you tell them the weathered look you want to achieve.

"New Tracks" Meetup Special pricing includes The Kit, 2 bottles of Weathering Mix & Shipping cost to your address: N - $65.00USD HO - $68.00USD S - $72.00USD O - $80.00USD

Recommended Tool List to build the model:
Work Surface - cutting mat - big enough for your scale
Leftover dish for stain
Wood glue – fast tacking carpenters glue such as Titebond Regular or II, Elmers or LePages
Masking tape
Waxed paper
Pin vise (drill bit is included in the kit)
Razor saw and/or Xacto knife
Tweezers – very sharp point is helpful
Wire snips
Small files, clamps, cheap brush
Disposable gloves
Patience

Please order your Hunterline Kit by May 8, 2021 to ensure delivery before the BUILD ALONG starts on May 22. Please order by:
Phone: 1-866-934-4174 or preferred
Email: rick@hunterline.com
For more information visit the Hunterline Website.

Just a suggestion on building Rick and Maureen's Build Along Model Bridge. Al Collins makes a sanding tool, that based on the video operation of the tool I saw, if I was going to build this kit I would contact Al at his Ultimation Website and ask to look at the video of the tool in operation.

6. Bill Davis, is going to build a Steve Milley, Rail Scale Models O scale kit starting in late August of this year. Steve, graciously, is going to be offering a significant discount on the kit, which will be available in N, HO, S, and O scales to modelers who want to Build Along with Bill Davis. More information on this Build Along will be posted on our Website and in the next issue of this magazine. Bill Davis is a highly respected and talented modeler who I am sure can help you improve your modeling.

I am looking for additional modeler builders and manufacturers who want to participate in this program starting in the August/September time frame please contact me at jimkellow@oscaleresource.com so we can schedule your project. I am particularly interested in having several N scale and more O scale Build Along model building project for this fall.

We all hope these new Personal Mentor Build Along segments get more modelers building models, learning some new skills, and gaining confidence in their building abilities and demonstrating the benefits of having a mentor.

Additional potential benefits are we get more modelers sharing their model building on our MY BUILD segments and participating in the NMRA Achievement Program. Good luck to everyone who participates.
look forward to seeing your finished models. Your suggestions to improve this program will be greatly appreciated. Please email me at jimkellow@sscaleresource.com.

Also please check out our new "New Tracks" Website which was developed by Dan Dawdy's company, Ribbon Rail Productions and don't forget to register, and confirm your registration, to get emails for all our events and zoom log in links. Also visit my Facebook page Jim Kellow MMR and follow/like it to stay in touch between articles.

Finally, I hope you saw my presentation on," Model Railroaders and their potential to be Professional Model Makers", to the Association of Professional Model Makers on February 17. If you missed it please check out the video. I would really appreciate your comments on the presentation. Please check out the APMM at their Website: https://www.modelmakers.org/. Many modelers will be able to join under the Free category and to see if they can benefit from the Association's programs.

Now for some Modeling:

**Stan Cedarleaf Decals**

We moved from the San Diego area to Prescott, Arizona where our new home had a yard that was just right for an outdoor G Gauge layout. The community to which we were moving was named "Prescott Canyon Estates." Hence the name of our railroad became the "Prescott Canyon Southern Garden Railroad." Shortened for use on rolling stock and locomotives to "Prescott Canyon Southern."

Of course, no manufacturer had the PCSRR logo or lettering on any of their equipment so we had to design our own. Many different techniques were tried. Some successful, some not. After many attempts, an ALPS printer was chosen for full color, white, gold and silver.

We've been able to work out some techniques to print color lettering with good success, although white, silver or gold have produced the best results. I would need to know what your requirements are and then we go from there. If you want to type out something in MS Word or Word Pad with the copy and sizing, then send it to me, I can work with it. I do have a variety of fonts, graphics and other "stuff" to work with.. I'll do the design and email you a sample sheet for your approval before final printing.

As of March 2016, Kay and I have sold the house and moved into a Senior Retirement Community. The PCSRR is now a Fallen Flag. HOWEVER, we are still in full production to serve you as needed.

Since ALPS USA has discontinued sales and service for all ALPS printers, we've been able to purchase the printers from an overseas source. Cost is quite a bit more with shipping than those here in the US and all supplies have more than doubled in price.

Pricing in US$ effective 8/1/2018

Because of the shortage of the ALPS supplies, the costs of the supplies have gone up sharply. Expect the finished costs to increase as well. We still are able to produce custom decals for the railroad and model community.

Price's listed are per 8 1/2 x11 sheet and START AT...... $34.50 for black. Color pages start at $38.50 White, Gold and Silver pages start at $38.50 (same color on the page, depending on density of copy. Tightly spaced copy on the page will increase cost per page.)
Color(s), other fancy stuff, page design and file preparation charges are done on a quote basis STARTS at $15.00 up. Logo design STARTS @ $25 plus the price of one sheet of decals.

Generally, prices include shipping to you.... However, there are exceptions for full page and International mailing. Stan Cedarleaf 928 778-3732 or 520 831-3390 Email Stan.Cedarleaf@oscaleresource.com.

In talking to Stan I asked him to offer a contest drawing where readers send in their contact information and a winner is drawn from the entries. He immediately agreed and offered the winner a prize of One full 7 1/2 x 10 page of custom designed decals in O scale. On behalf of all the modelers reading this article, thank you.

To find out how difficult it was to work with Stan on creating a custom decal I set about to design a custom logo for my freelance Trolley Railroad, JN&P RR. I started as usual when I need creative advice and asked for ideas on my Facebook page. I got several and selected one I had never thought about but really liked immediately. I asked one of the co-owners of the RR for her comments and we came up with a design. I did a rough (very rough drawing) and sent it off to Stan Cedarleaf for his comments.

Stan wanted to know the colors I painted my Trolleys, size of logo, any other information besides the logo I wanted, how many logos I wanted and in what color I wanted the decal printed. Stan gave me several ideas for the logo and we discussed fronts to be used. Once we had agreed on the final version, Stan printed me a full sheet and mailed it. Total time from initial contact to completion by Stan was one day. Here is the logo and lettering Stan developed for me. The whole process was very easy and I am really pleased with the final result. Thanks Stan for your help and advice. I encourage all of you to enter Stan’s contest and give making custom decals a try.

LEFT: My very rough sketch and a photo of the competed decals installed on one of my scratchbuilt brass Trolley Models.

How to Enter the Cedarleaf Custom Decal Drawing

To enter the Cedarleaf Custom Decal drawing, each modeler must complete the form here. I know that all of us are looking forward to seeing the winner’s decals installed on his models, and hear about his experience in working with Stan in getting his custom decals designed.

Stan was kind enough to also provide the following comments to help modelers successfully apply decals to their models. This should be helpful to all of us.
Even though this decal material is very easy to work with, the surface is a bit tender and can scratch if handled roughly.

For best results, always apply the material to a Semi-Gloss or GLOSSY surface. Dull or matte surfaces do not allow the material to adhere as well. In my experience, Rustoleum American Accents or Painter’s Touch 2X “Clear Satin” finish (same product, different stores) has proven to produce a very good surface for application. If the surface is not glossy, I find that it works best when sprayed with American Accents Clear Gloss or Satin which becomes an excellent base for the decals. Mask or remove any windows, headlamps, etc. prior to spraying.

Just a word. When using Rustoleum Clear Gloss and Satin named above, test them on the paint you are over spraying first to see if the paints are compatible. We cannot be responsible for any paint or coating incompatibility...

Trim the decals as close to the lettering to have as little ‘excess’ (1/16-1/8 inches or so) clear material around the edges as possible. I generally use a sharp scissors. Occasionally, I’ll trim them with a paper cutter.

These guidelines may be very familiar to you and you do know how to work with decals, but I’ve found these procedures to work very well with the material.

Fill a soup bowl with warm water and stir in 4-6 drops of dishwashing liquid. (The dishwashing liquid makes the water wetter and allows the decal material to work much easier.) I do this after putting the water in to keep it from foaming up. A Photo Wetting agent (Photo Flo) will work just fine as well if you can find it.

After cutting each decal to size, I dip them in the water for 4-5 seconds and place them on a folded white paper towel while the water is activating the release of the decal material from the backing. Then dip your finger in the water and wet the surface of the area the decal is to be applied. When the decal is released from the backing, (time varies from 30 seconds to minutes, CAREFULLY slide it onto the surface of the model. The tools I’ve found to move the decal on the model are a fine pointed Exacto knife, my fingers, a toothpick and/or a soft brush about 3/8 inch wide.

When the decal is in the right position, gently blot all excess water off with the corner of a paper towel. Although I rarely use a setting solution, “Solvaset” or “Micro-Sol” both work quite well with this material. If you use it, this would be the time to apply it, let it work with the decal to set it. Proceed to the next decal but be careful of the one you just put on. I’ve grabbed the model to turn it over, stuck my thumb or finger on the one I just put on and messed it all up...

After application, put the model aside and go play trains. When the decals are dry (usually 24 hours), spray the model with a thin coat of Rustoleum 2X Satin followed by wetter coats. The edges of the decal just disappear and you have great looking lettering. Krylon Matte (can #1311) is good for a dull coat over the satin. DO NOT USE Krylon FLAT.

For small scales and small areas of application, where over spraying is not feasible, I’ve had good reports from folks brushing Polyscale Satin or Clear Gloss over the decals after drying. It’s a water based product and shouldn’t react with the decal material and your paint. However, test it first….. I’ve also had reports that Dull-Coat does not work well directly over the raw decals. It has been known to melt the decal material.

If you have any problems or questions, call me. 928-778-3732 or email me at Stan.Cedarleaf@oscaleresource.com.
New O Scale Supplier? I think I may have found a new O Scale Supplier for O Scale Model Builders: 

**Mark Mead**

I first heard from Mark on my Facebook page: "Regarding your FB post looking for scratch built structures for an article. Attached is a picture of one of my recent builds. It is HO scale, but could be built in O scale as well. Thank you. Mark." O scale, so of course, I replied! Please meet Mark Mead:

I’m a realist: I know everything I try may not work the first time. I know that what I see in my mind may take many hours of trial and error to replicate. Redesigns are common and should be seen as progress not failure.

I’m an experimenter: Egg shells, baking soda and pastel chalks work well to form shell roads for a layout based in Florida.

I’m stubborn: I will keep trying even if I set the project aside for awhile. My mind has a tendency to work on things without me realizing it. When I go back to that project, I’m able to see it with fresh eyes and tackle it again.

I’m able to laugh at myself: We all make mistakes and fail at things we try the first time. Henry Ford said “Failure is the opportunity to begin again, only smarter.” Never see failure as something permanent. Keep working until you achieve it.

I started my first layout in 1975 at twelve years old. Even then, I wanted things to be as prototypical as possible. As I got older, I’d watch the prototype and ask questions, learning by watching and listening. I built my first craftsman structure kit from Campbell Scale Models at fifteen. These are not easy kits, but the instructions are excellent and very detailed. Campbell Scale Models is still in business today, a testament of their quality and customer service. Building these kits taught me how to scratch build with raw lumber. In high school I took drafting courses, in college I took design courses, all of this combined has served me well and has contributed to where I am in the hobby today.

*Shell road made with crushed egg shells, baking soda and pastel chalks.*
Currently I am in the process of establishing Scale Structure Builders, a craftsman structure kit company. My kits feature laser cut walls, but everything else is board by board construction. My first kit is designed for the beginning craftsman model builder. Simple yet valuable techniques will be learned that can carry over into more advanced kits. These same techniques can be used when the modeler is ready to tackle their first scratch built structure.

First step in model building. "Trial and error!" is the best teacher. Asking questions of other model builders. Reading articles and watching videos. Building other manufacturer’s kits and deciding what I liked and did not like about the way they did things. More trial and error.

Second step: Take that first step. Scratch building is not hard. By learning basic techniques and developing your preferred methods of “doing it” you can master scratch building. Will there always be things to learn? Of course! That is part of the fun. Some days you will feel invincible, others you will feel like a total failure. This is normal, embrace it. Also understand that the world is full of self professed “experts” who love to find fault with anything and everything. They will find you, they will nit pick, they will tell you everything you did wrong. Don’t let them discourage you. Listen to what they say and think about it. Maybe you can improve in that area, maybe they are full of pooh. Again, don’t let them discourage you.

I began modeling in HO scale and have continued, it’s a nice workable scale for me and I can still see it. At fifty seven years old, I would not want to model in any smaller scale. I have scratch built in O scale and enjoy that very much. The level of detail you can model is wonderful. I also want to try my hand at an O scale trestle and have wandered down the abandoned mainline in my city to photograph and measure a prototype trestle over a local creek.

I asked mark about offering a contest drawing for his new company. His reply: "I have been thinking about your question regarding what I should offer as a “give away.” While my kits are HO and you write for an O scale magazine, I would like to offer a set of plans for a simple O scale building that the modeler could build. I would include detailed drawings, written instructions, a materials list and information on where to purchase the details." Sounded good to me and a great way for Mark to gauge, no pun intended, the interest of O scale modelers in his model kits. I wonder if other HO manufacturers would be interested in doing this? Why not? I shall enquire for future articles.

To enter Mark’s drawing, each modeler must complete the form here.
I look forward to see who wins Mark's contest, and the model he/she builds. Thanks Mark for your interest in O scale and trying something new.

Mark also believes: "Helping others to learn this hobby is important." He said: "Many of us, myself included, are introverts so working with others takes us outside our comfort zone. However, I have found that being in a group or one on one with someone who shares a common interest and seriously wants to learn is an energizing experience. Everyone enjoys talking about what they are good at so don’t be afraid to ask questions. If you see something you like, ask how they did it, or find out who did it and track them down. In the future, I hope to showcase some of how I do things on sites like YouTube or other model railroad venues. Writing articles or starting a blog page is another option open to me. Clinics at hobby shops or model shows are always a popular venue. It boils down to you taking that first step and asking, listening, doing, learning and doing again until you are satisfied."

Thanks Mark. I hope to see more of your modeling in the future. Mark can be contacted at Mark.Mead@oscaleresource.com.

Please now meet an interesting talented modeler from Australia.

**Anthony Boccaccio**

My name is Anthony Boccaccio presently living in Florida from New York I have been in the hobby for over 60 years in o scale 2 rail and so was my grandfather and father. They started High Iron Models back in 1939 making rail and true scale track. During the war, all came to a stop. When the war was over, we resumed our production. In 1968, my grandfather passed and my dad and I took over. I sold off the True Scale division and kept the rail manufacturing, and also started to make car and loco kits for a while. We were just about to build a museum to display and build the largest o scale 2 rail lay out in the country when my wife and daughters were killed by a drunk driver in 1984. At that time, I stopped all production and just continued to collect. When...
my dad passed in 2006, all dreams of building ended. We were into in 2014 when I had my first heart attack and then started to slow down, and in 2018 and just a few weeks ago another heart attack. I decided to sell off most of what is left including the rail manufacturing business.

I was looking for some sort of club that was in 2 rail o scale to donate what I have so it can be seen by many children and their parents, but all that went away, so I am just going to sell off what I can. I have been scratch building locos, cars and structures with great detail including a scale replica of the Hell Gate Bridge in steel over 27 feet long and 8 feet high. I also convert 3 rail to 2 rail and custom paint. The photo above shows some of the models I built and enjoy.

If you think I can be helpful to you in your model building of O scale 2 rail models please let me know at: Anthony.Boccaccio@oscaleresource.com

Please meet a P48 Modeler.

Jeremy Dummler

My name is Jeremy Dummler, and I’ve been a model railroader for 39 years. I got my first model trains for Christmas when I was 6, and in some capacity, I’ve had model trains in my home ever since then. That first 4x8 layout was built by two family friends who were model railroaders, and who started teaching me at 6 years old how to take care of the track, fix issues, and add details. When I built a new layout in high school, another friend who was an electrician and model railroader taught me to solder and how to work with electrical components.

As I grew up, several other family friends who were either rail fans, or who had worked for the railroad, made sure that I had access to railroad events. I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area, and I was able to watch Southern Pacific 2472 be pulled out of it’s display location and taken for restoration. I was gifted many back issues of Rail News to keep my interest in trains active.
I really started to learn to build models with an eye toward prototype fidelity about 15 years ago when I met Jack Burgess. Jack convinced me to abandon plans to model a fictional railroad in the Sierras of California, and to prototype model. I started paying closer attention to how Jack builds models, learning to do photo study from him for details, and using his techniques to expand my modeling horizons. Learning ways to improve models, and my modeling, from Jack, not only the actual modeling, but also his methods for how to approach a project, has made me a better modeler.

I have modeled in HO scale, having dabbled in N for a few years in the past. I have modeled several things: 1939 on the Yosemite Valley Railroad, and the Norfolk & Western in 1927 with my wife and modeling partner.

I now model in Proto48, and am modeling the Yosemite Valley Railroad as it appeared in August of 1928. I made the change in scale just over a year ago due to issues with my vision, and I’m thrilled to have changed scale to something I can see and work on comfortably.

I often help other modelers with information or techniques. In the online, interconnected, world we live in, it’s easy for people from all over to reach out and ask questions or share information. I am a modeler with a disability as well, being legally blind, so I often help others of low vision with my experiences with vision and modeling products, as well as giving clinics and writing articles on the tools and techniques that I use in my modeling, learned from Jack, or modified on my own, to spread good modeling to as many people as I can. The photos above and on the right are just a few of my projects.

If you believe I can help you with your modeling, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you. You can contact me at: Jeremy.Dummler@oscaleresource.com
John Reynolds

I have been involved in the hobby of model railroading for over 50 years now. My primary modeling scales are HO and O scale narrow gauge (On30).

Frankly, the reason I model in these scales is that my hands are large and my fine motor skills are poor. While I have used a lot of old Model Railroader and Railroad Model Craftsman articles for inspiration, most of what I have learned has been learned through trial and error.

About four years ago now, I started building paper structures (print outs). Part of this was that plastic kits were getting hard to find and plastic structures were getting expensive. (Bad in HO, ridiculous in 1/4 inch scale).

Later, I actually started building On30 equipment models out of recycled card. This was inspired by people complaining about how expensive the hobby was getting.

Apartment living got me started building small layouts. Eventually, I got bit by the "Micro Layout" bug as I used to bring projects into my local hobby shop for evaluation and fun. If you think I can help you in your modeling please contact me at: John.Reynolds@oscaleresource.com
Here is a modeler just getting started on his layout. Looks like it is going to be a nice one.

Michael Maurer

In early 2000, after having been out of the hobby for some years, I jumped back in head-first and purchased several pieces of rolling stock and motive power in HO scale. I proceeded to build a small layout in the basement of the home I owned at the time. That layout saw several iterations in the time it existed. In 2012, I tore down that layout and moved to an apartment. I had also begun to dabble in a modular form of the hobby (Sipping & Switching Society) and was ready to fully go in that direction until getting married and having to move again. Fast forward to 2020 when we moved to South Carolina for job reasons, I decided to scrap the second layout I had in our new home in North Carolina and switch to On30 from HO. I have since liquidated 95% of my HO collection to fund my foray into On30 and building the layout I am currently working on. I have always been fascinated with logging operations and was particularly intrigued by the layout David Popp of Model Railroader Video Plus (MRVP) was building. My layout is loosely based on his, but is elongated to hopefully increase the operational fun on the railroad once I’m “done” (is it ever really done?). The layout features a Sector Plate at one end to switch trains “on and off the layout” and a turn table at the other end to turn the engines. There will also be a small staging track to facilitate switching trains off-layout.

I suppose I answered that to a degree above, but I would include also my club involvement with the Southbound Model Railroaders in Winston-Salem, NC. I got involved there in the early 2000’s and became the club secretary, and then a couple years later actually became their youngest president (at the time) and served a couple terms in that role. I also spent a short time as treasurer before moving to SC in late 2019.

I am the son of a cabinet maker so I learned to build at an early age. I spent a lot of time in my dad’s shop on my grandparent’s farm in north east Ohio. I also helped on the farm quite a bit and I think I gained a pretty good work ethic growing up in that environment. I believe my woodworking skills translate to model building. You have to formulate a plan, follow steps, be patient along the way and not rush things. Whether you are building a kit with well thought-out instructions or scratch-building, there’s always a plan as to how to achieve your best results. Of course, there are mistakes along the way, but those should be looked at as learning experiences to keep in mind for future builds.
Photo (1) shows the open grid benchwork built and laying on the floor of my layout room in our basement. The layout is built in sections. The longest leg of the L shaped configuration has four six-foot sections. The "football" shaped corner is 34" in width along the front and 33" deep. The short section of the L is six and a half feet long.

Photo (2) shows where I have started building and preparing to attach the legs to the benchwork.

Photo (3) shows the legs attached to the benchwork. I used carriage bolts and wing nuts to attach them for easy removal if I need to move the layout to another location.

Photos (4) & (5) show the upper framing of the structure that will provide the "shadow box" enclosure of the layout. The entire scene, from one end to the other, will be enclosed with LED lighting from above.
In the beginning, I did a lot by trial and error, but I also had guys I looked up to in the hobby and observed what they did and tried to mimic them. There were three guys from my club days that I always and still have high regard for. Charlie Fliechman (who is an MMR), Dick Zimmerman (The Tree Man) and Rob Morrison (an HO guy turned On30 guy). All three of these guys are exceptional modelers and inspired me in ways they will never know. They all have made their impressions on me over the years in little ways that I probably don’t even realize.

My scale is On30. I switched because of the inspiration of the MRVP series, but quite frankly because I can see it more easily than HO. And, I just like the looks of it from a size and scale perspective.

I am willing to help mentor other modelers in any way I can. Whether it’s building benchwork or working on scenery, I like to teach what I know and help others improve in their skills; quite often I learn something too, so it’s a win-win! You can contact me at Michael.Maurer@oscaleresource.com

Photo (6) shows the sub-roadbed going down on the layout. There will be a log pond/mill scene, a logging camp scene, along with a log loading scene and various other buildings that would facilitate a logging operation.

Photo (7) shows the roadbed going down for the track. I am using Midwest Products HO scale roadbed. It is slightly undersized for the Micro Engineering code 83, On30 track, but it will work since my scenery will come up to the tracks anyway. Logging railroads typically did not use a whole lot of ballast.

Photo (8) shows the Sector Plate at the long end of the railroad. This will be used to switch trains from track to track and “off-layout”. There will be a snow shed on the other side of the sector plate to simulate that the train is come from elsewhere. I plan on using a Hunterline snow shed for this. There also will be a small staging track on the back of the layout for staging trains.

Now I want you to meet a subway modeler. This modeling was something really new for me. I love the newsstand.

Joseph Garcia

I have been “playing with trains” since I was four years old. My first layout was “N” scale. I had no mentors, using books as guides. I never scratch built, using only commercially available kits and components. Living in small apartments all my life, I did not have room for a workspace that would facilitate scratch building.

When I retired, I had plans for a series of modular “N” layouts, and then Lionel produced its O-scale R-27 subway set. As a life-long subway rider, I was deeply touched by that set, and resolved to build a layout for it. Not having room for a permanent layout, I instead opted for a series of working dioramas that could be connected together, each about six feet long and about nine inches wide, fully portable.

I was motivated by a mental picture of what a subway should look like, and I combed books and the Internet for pictures to use as guides. I found a near non-existence of commercial items relating to subways. As a result, most of the tunnel and station modeling has been scratch built of necessity. To date, I have built a tunnel section with a streetscape on top. The vehicles and figures are commercial, but most everything else is built from wood, plastic and metal.

Tunnel lighting is by fiber optics. The “street” is black foam board. A sound module mounted under the layout provides street and traffic noises.
Currently I am working on the second module, a Times Square station. The station is lit by LED strips inside plastic straws. The particular model that I would like to highlight is the newsstand.

This model is based on my childhood memories of similar newsstands on the subway platforms. I searched through hundreds of photos on the Internet, but found only one that had a tiny bit of such a newsstand visible, so I built this from memory. The blue walls are flexible colored plastic sheets, held in place by slots cut in the roof and floor, plastic vertical girder sections inside, and a strand of wire top and bottom to further reinforce the curved profile. The marquee is paper on plastic sheet, printed in a font that replicates the original font as closely as possible based on that one photo I found.

The newspapers and magazines are mostly printed on paper from images found on the Internet and glued to bits of plastic sheet, as are the candies. The M&M’s, the Coke cooler and bottles, some of the publications at the bottom front, and some of the shelves are commercial items. The chewing gum display on the left is an image printed on paper and folded around a piece of Styrofoam. Lighting is provided by a 3-LED strip.

As to what role I could play as mentor, I don’t see myself as having that kind of experience. But I enjoy sharing what I do with others, so that they might be inspired to take my ideas further. That’s how I was able to get as far as I have to date: by observing what others do and getting ideas for my O scale Subway.

If you think I can help you please contact me at Joseph.Garcia@oscaleresource.com.
Now let’s meet a modeler from New Zealand who converted from HO to On30.

**Paul Smith**

My name is Paul Smith, I'm 72, from New Zealand, and I model trains in On30, and I build at 6mm/1foot. I do this so that the buildings do not over power the trains.

My working life was as an Locomotive Engineer, with as it was known then, New Zealand Railways. I had the good fortune to work on steam in my early days and nights. I have retired, and the rail hobby was a natural progression, even though I “played trains” from an early age.

NZR operates on a narrow gauge of 3'/6", so using my knowledge and eyes, I am able to create On30 scenes that “look right”, with regard to the prototype. Bonjing Valley Railway (BVR) is based on New Zealand in the 1950's, before the arrival of mainline diesel power. Although my rolling stock is Bachmann based, this does not appear to detract from the overall scene. NZR did have a roster of Baldwins. BVR has been in the “creating” stage for 15 years, and may never be finished.

I have other interests including motor mechanics, playing Cornet in several local Brass Bands, and generally attending to DIY jobs around the home and property. BVR receives attention on Sunday afternoons, and odd times during the week as projects demand. Operation is DC only, and the layout is Point to Point with one train only on the block section. I am the sole operator, and have not felt the need for multiple operations.

Construction was based on a backbone system with risers for track base. 3/8 ply, with pinex (not sure of international title) glued and screwed, cork underlay, and all track is Atlas c 100 flex. Points (turnouts) are a mix of #4, and snap. One turntable is a Peco ON30 unit, and operated by a mandraulic system.

All ballast used is crushed local rock, fixed with 50/50 pva and water. Coloring by diluted commercial product, and multiple colour applications until a blend is reached that I'm happy with. Two station yards. Initial departure is Bonjing, and the track runs a convoluted route to Punget. The scenic effect is taken from New Zealand and “seems right”, with some viewers indicating “I know where this spot is.”.

One could not ask for greater praise. I have become a planner, builder, electrical engineer, creator, operator, carpenter, plus a host of other acquired skills on the BVR journey.

On30 became the chosen medium due to failing eyesight; however, the original concept for BVR was HO. After seeing some Bachmann products being promoted on hobby magazines, I made a purchase and never looked back.

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The Internet has a lot to answer to, as at the time, there were no outlets for the larger product this side of the Pacific... There have been some outlets that are “no more”; however, I have maintained my purchase history with reputable retailers. EBAY has not been a part of my purchase history, but USPS has done very well. All pictures are my own work with some hit and miss shots. A change to LED hidden lighting seems to alter results with my Canon DSLR. I do not intend to take any photographers away from their work.

I enjoy creating scenery, and have advanced some of my ideas via social media sites. A major lesson I have learnt is; just do it; if it's not right, then do it again, but learn as you go. It is your hobby, not for the approval of someone else. I enjoy helping other modellers with questions, there is no such thing as a stupid question.

BVR is built is a shed constructed for purpose, and is shared with an automotive workshop.

Pictures included are of myself, construction, and some finished areas. Please contact me at Paul.Smith@oscaleresource.com if you think I can help your modeling.
Well it’s time for me to get back to my workbench and travel some more “New Tracks”. I hope I hear from more O scalers who want to be a Featured Model Builder and/or manufacturer in the new Build Along series. A Featured Model Builder can pick the kit and the manufacturer they want to work with, or vice versa. Just let me know of your interest at jimkellow@oscalereresource.com

Please visit my Facebook page Jim Kellow MMR and follow it to stay in touch. Also please register, and confirm registration, at my web site: NewTracksModeling.com to get notices for all the Zoom ”New Tracks Meetups” every Wednesday and Saturday evening at 7pm Eastern time, as well as get links to my previous articles in The O Scale Resource online magazine. I can't believe I have been writing them for over 3 years.

Thanks again for reading this far, and best of luck with your model building and finding a mentor.
By Ross Dando

Have a modeling question for our experts? Please send your description of your modeling problem to backshopsolutions@oscaleresource.com.

Squirrel!

Like a few other modelers I know, I got distracted the last couple months. Day job, helping a start up, the sun came out, and it’s almost car season so I need to get it ready. So what have I accomplished?

Modules

Once the switch module track was down I moved to the second module with the main and siding. My goal was to have the rails on the siding be in disrepair, but still able to successfully run trains. As with all other projects, this has been a learning experience. I cut the rail through the head and web every scale 39’ and then proceeded to add a bow and then a crown an alternated this the length of the section. When I started laying the rails, I offset the bows and crowns to try and get irregularity from side to side. The results are pretty good (if I do say so myself). The cars track through and have a slight rock and sway. Once all the track was down, I removed the panels and glued everything down. The next step after running a train back and forth with wires wrapped around the end of the rails was to spend time getting the wiring put together so all the rails have power. I was amazed by all the work to get the wiring cleaned up and install connectors between modules.
I felt like I was building a machine. I have run a locomotive back and forth and that’s about it.
As if I didn’t already have enough projects going, I found my next scene I want to model and it will need several tank cars. I found the Atlas 17,600 gallon car will fit the bill nicely. I received the model and evaluated what would be needed to convert it to P48 and install Protocraft trucks and couplers. Poof! The car exploded on my bench and jumped into the mill! I removed the raised pin, the truck mounts too, and smoothed the coupler mounting pad. This was followed, but machining a pad to hold the threaded bolster. Once I had the truck mounting completed, I turned to building a coupler box. With all those pieces made, I got distracted by something and I need to finish the final assembly and dull coat so weathering can begin.
Etchings

I have been waiting on etchings for a couple projects. First is the grill and mirrors for the grain truck I am hoping to release in the near future. A couple small changes needed and we should be off to the races.
Second is the running board for the Atlas PS4427 low side covered hopper. I have also started to test it on a MTH PS2CD 4427 high side covered hopper. These will also be released once adjustments are verified. The assembly and installation went smoothly and really improves the look of the car.
I know I worked on other things, but I don’t have any pictures so there is no reminder to help me write about it. I did receive some castings for the SW1500 project so it will be back on the workbench in the number one spot as soon as I have time to work at the bench again. Until then, enjoy working on something and please send me some questions.

Ross

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Scene Around the Layout

By Neville Rossiter

Last year a hobby shop closed. I bought there often, and before it closed, the owner offered all his evergreen shapes to me at a bargain price.

I was left with many packets of small N and HO size shapes I knew I would never use.

I decided to chop them up and use them for scrap piles. Very simple, cut a thin narrow piece of styrene sheet for against fences then cut any size you like and coat it with glue and sprinkle on the pieces.

You eventually get down to adding piece by piece, depending how far you want to go.

Spray them a rusty colour, then place them on the layout. Blend them in with ground cover, and touch them up with paint if you want to, and you have a small scrap metal pile.
We are proud to feature reader’s work. So get those cameras and cell phones out and start shooting!
High quality JPG or TIF files are only.
Email to daniel@modelrailroadresource.com with a description of your pictures.
Hi Daniel, I recently completed a freelanced O Scale Caboose project that may warrant consideration for a place in The O Scale Resource.

This started as a partially built Ambroid kit for a NP wood caboose that I found at Strasburg in October. I cut out openings for the lcl doors, moved one window, built an interior, added grab irons and nbw's, added weight, and Kadee 700 series couplers. Scratch built details include operating lcl doors, end railings, hand brake assemblies, roofwalks and side steps. After that, I created a way to make the floor removable.

The caboose was then hand painted and lettered into an H. E. Salzburg style scheme for a freelanced RR. The final steps were installing the KTM trucks, window glass, Taurus ladders, glue the cupola on and to mount the underframe. Weathering was done with pan pastels.
This series shows our readers what other modelers are working on. All that’s needed is a simple snapshot of what your workbench looks like and the project on it. Send us a picture or two along with a short description of what you are working on so we can share it here. If it’s a project under construction, send it in. Repair job, send it in. Completed project, send it in. Send your pictures and descriptions to daniel@modelrailroadresource.com
This month I'm working on improvements to my W&R Brass 44 tonner to turn it into Long Island #400. One of the hurdles was adding all wheel electrical pickup. In addition, a few prototype specific details were added, and it will then be painted and lettered. The final assembly will include a Stanton S-cab system with twin speakers and microscope slide cover window glass.
This series shows our readers what other modelers are working on. All that’s needed is a simple snapshot of what your workbench looks like and the project on it. Send us a picture or two along with a short description of what you are working on so we can share it here. If it’s a project under construction, send it in. Repair job, send it in. Completed project, send it in. Send your pictures and descriptions to daniel@modelrailroadresource.com
Have an upcoming O Scale event? We would like to help publicize it. Send us the information up to one year in advance, and we'll place it here along with a direct link to your Website and/or Email.

Click here to send us your information.

O Scale West - S West and Narrow Gauge West
May 28-30, 2021
Hyatt Regency Santa Clara (San Francisco area)
Website: www.oscalewest.com

Harrisburg Narrow O Summer Meet
June 11th and 12th 2021
Sponsored by: Narrow Gauge Modeling Company
St. Thomas United Church of Christ
6490 Linglestown Road
Harrisburg, PA 17112

O Scale National Convention
June 17-20, 2021
Denver, CO
The O scale community will head to Denver June 17-20, 2021 for the annual convention of all trains scaled 48 to the foot. This will be the main event for O scale modelers looking for great layout tours, modeling clinics, and hundreds of vendor tables loaded with the new products as well as treasures going back for more than 70 years. Denver is home to a major airport that quickly connects the east and west coasts to the heartland. Amtrak’s California Zephyr connects Chicago and San Francisco to the Mile High City.
More details coming soon
Website: https://oscalenational.com/

The 2021 St. Louis RPM Meet
Friday, July 30th and Saturday, July 31st, 2021
The St. Louis RPM Meet will happen at the Gateway Convention Center, One Gateway Drive, Collinsville, IL 62234. Collinsville is 12 miles east of metro St. Louis on I-55/70. The meet starts at 9 AM both days.
Website: http://www.icgdecals.com/stlrpm/

Eastern PA 2 Rail O Scale Train Show and Swap Meet
August 7th, 2021
Strasburg PA
Strasburg Train Show: Two-rail swap meet at the Strasburg Fire Co, 203 W. Franklin St, Strasburg, Pennsylvania. 9 am-1 pm. Admission $5, wives/children/military w. ID free, tables $25 for first table, additional $20 per. Great food, modular layout, clinics. Contact John Dunn (609-432-2871) Click here for info

41st National Narrow Gauge Convention
September 1-4, 2021
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Hickory, NC
Manufacturers exhibits, contest, home layouts, operating modules and clinics.
Email: 41nngc.chairman@gmail.com
Website: http://www.40nngc.com

Southern New England 2 Rail O Scale Show
October 2nd, 2021
161 Chestnut Street, Gardner, MA 01440
Train show with a large selection of dealers specializing in everything O scale! Ow5, Proto48, On30, On3. Show Hours: 9:30am-3:00pm. Admission: $6.00 per person, $8.00 per family
Email: sneshowchairman@snemrr.org
Web Address: http://www.snemrr.org/index.html

O & S Scale Midwest Show
NOTE: New dates for this years show.
Lower admission and hotel rates!

Friday (Set up) Saturday and Sunday, October 8-10, 2021
This is a dedicated 2 rail O Scale and S Scale show; however, we encourage and welcome the many modelers and collectors from the 3 rail and high rail side of the hobby to attend. There are many aspects of the hobby, including building, scenery and more that applies to any scale. Moreover, this show is a great place to get inspired while meeting old friends and making new ones!
Website: oscalemidwest.com/
Email: info@oscalemidwest.com

Eastern PA 2 Rail O Scale Train Show and Swap Meet
October 16, 2021
Strasburg PA
Strasburg Train Show: Two-rail swap meet at the Strasburg Fire Co, 203 W. Franklin St, Strasburg, Pennsylvania. 9 am-1 pm. Admission $5, wives/children/military w. ID free, tables $25 for first table, additional $20 per. Great food, modular layout, clinics. Contact John Dunn (609-432-2871) Click here for info

The Cleveland O Scale 2-Rail Train Meet
November 6 @ 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
The Cleveland O Scale 2-Rail Train Meet has been rescheduled for April 10, 2021. The website (http://www.cleveshows.com/) has updated information on the show. The show will still be at the UAW Hall (5615 Chevrolet Blvd., Parma, Ohio 44130) and happen from 9am to 2pm. Admission is $6.00. Contact Sam Shumaker at (440) 248-3055 for table and additional show information.

O Scale March Meet
April 1-3, 2022
Westin Lombard Yorktown Center
Lombard, IL
Under new management and new dates!
The March O Scale Meet is a 3 day gathering of vendors, customers, clinics, and fun held annually in March in the Chicagoland area. This is the Chicago O Scale train show you've heard of.
Website: http://marchmeet.net/
Email: ChicagoMeet@yahoo.com
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