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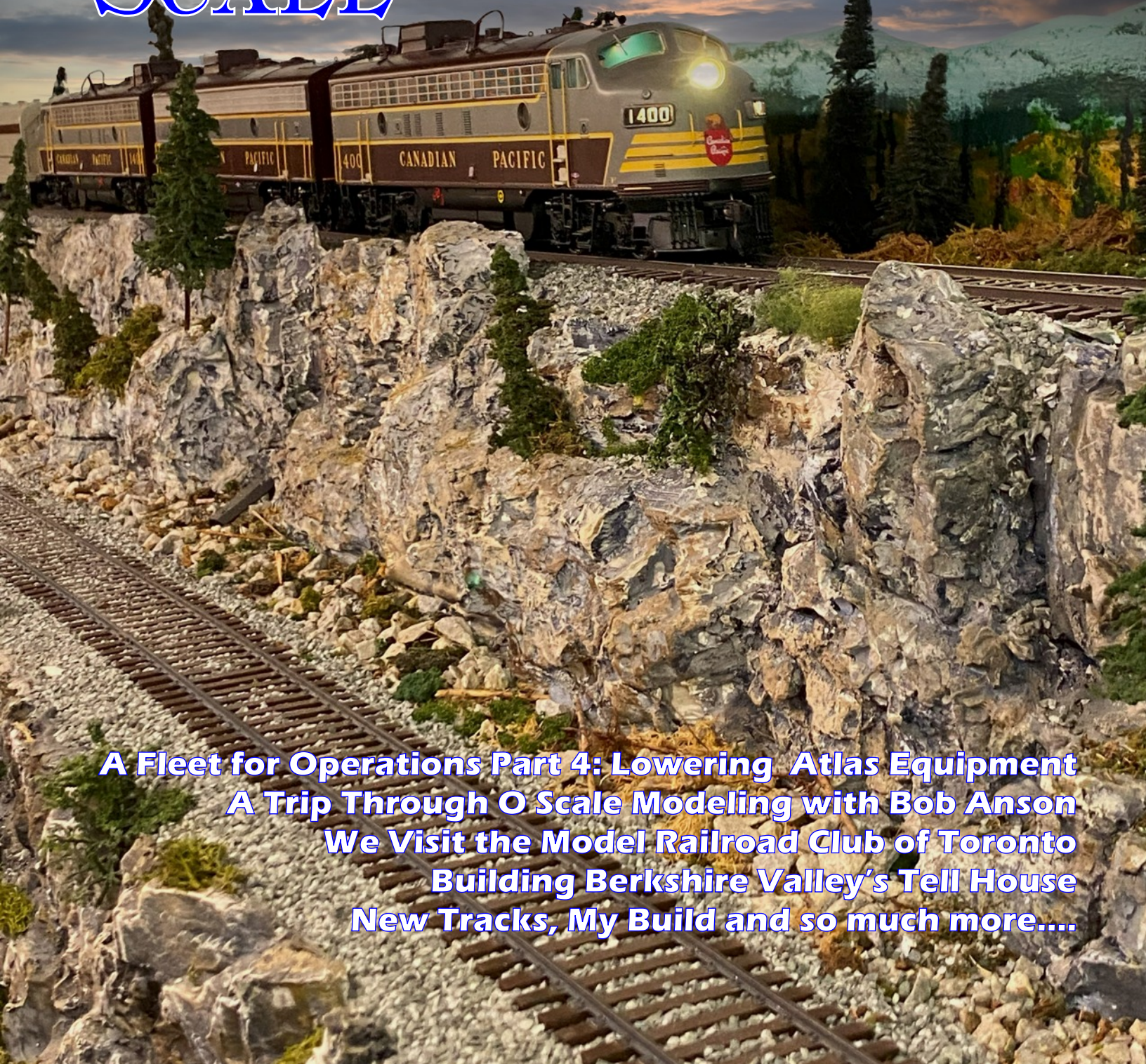
THE

NEWS, REVIEWS, INFORMATION TO USE

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

Volume 12 No. 6
July/August 2025

SCALE



A Fleet for Operations Part 4: Lowering Atlas Equipment
A Trip Through O Scale Modeling with Bob Anson
We Visit the Model Railroad Club of Toronto
Building Berkshire Valley's Tell House
New Tracks, My Build and so much more....

Published Bi Monthly

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Owner / Publisher

Amy Dawdy

Managing Editor

Daniel Dawdy

Advertising Manager

Jeb Kriigel

Welcome to the online *O Scale Resource Magazine*. Our 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

Amy and I visit the beautiful Model Railroad Club of Toronto.

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From the Publisher's Desk

Well, hello and welcome back to the Publisher's Desk, a/k/a rant, diatribe, harangue, tirade, and eremiad page. I think I covered everything.

First off, if you saw our preliminary cover on Facebook, you will notice a few things missing. One is Boyd Reyes' O Scale Layout article. This issue was getting very large as it was and the Model Railroad of Toronto article was way overdue, so we moved Boyd's layout over to next issue. Good news, he will get a cover shot a well! Structures for the Cumbres and Cat Shed Railroad was also moved back a month.

Second, the year is half over already – the older you get the faster it seems to go. As I am writing this, we here in Illinois are in a major heat wave. Days of over 90°F and high humidity. What better place to be than down in the basement working on, “da scenery”.

Third, as to not over tax anyone with lots of words during this heat wave, we have a lot of pictures an this issue featuring *Bob Anson's Remembrances*, as well as, *The Model Railroad Club of Toronto*. Also, Brian Scace continues his series with *A Fleet for Operations Part 4* this time lowering Atlas cars and so much more.

And last, the 2 dollar bill mystery continues as Michigan, New York, Syracuse and Harrisburg were the post marked on the last few envelopes. We are narrowing down suspects, however keep 'em coming. It's fun to watch Gen Z types at the coffee shop look like we just gave them Monopoly money and have to run to the owner to see what to do because they think it's counterfeit.



I continue to work on the street scene where I tore out the old street and replaced it, along with filling in scenery for this whole area. Lastly, don't forget about upcoming shows. The [Strasburg 2 Rail Train Show](#)

[August 9, 2025](#) will be the next one coming up. See our listing on the end of this issue for many upcoming shows.



After almost 12 years of publishing *The O Scale Resource Magazine*, we still get questions about the format. All ads can be clicked on to go

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Happy Reading & Happy Modeling,

Amy & Dan Dawdy

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Know the old joke "How do you make a million dollars in the model railroad business? Start with two million."? Well, same here. We are not going anywhere and will still continue to bring you the best in O scale information every other month but...

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Traveling to layouts, web services, storage, and hosting fees have all gone up. So we thought we would try "buy us a coffee" in hopes of helping with these extra expenses.

Therefore, if you are getting a good read and enjoying the information, please "buy us a coffee" and help us continue to bring you the best in O scale information. **Hey, even a buck an issue every few issues will help.** 😊



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June, 2025

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July, 2025

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Current

PPM-33640 Chicken Coop (1 + 1)
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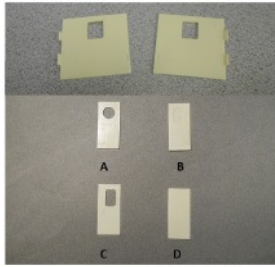
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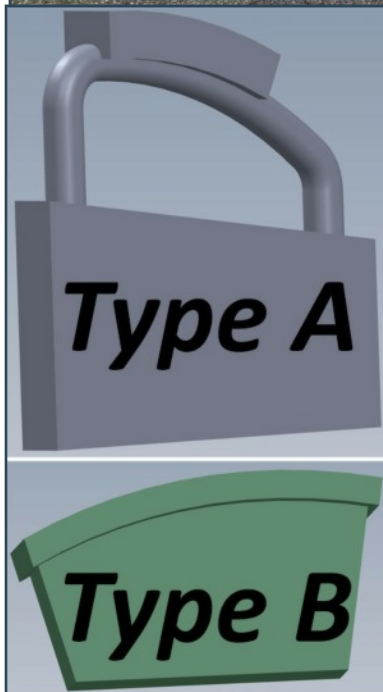
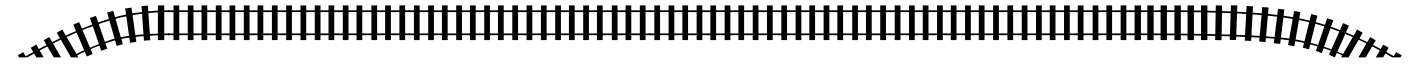
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You will receive 40 seats and 80 arm rests all unpainted. This is a bulk pack for builders and only available as such.

\$25.00 plus shipping. [Check their Website here for more Resin 3D printed items.](#)

Atlas has some new products ready for pre-order.

O Premiere ET44 Locomotive. The Wabtec ET44AC (Evolution Series Tier 4, AC traction) is a high-horsepower diesel-electric locomotive built by Wabtec Corporation (formerly GE Transportation) to meet the stringent EPA Tier 4 emissions standards. It is part of GE's Evolution Series (GEVO) and is designed to replace the ES44AC, featuring enhanced fuel efficiency and lower emissions. Select samples shown below.

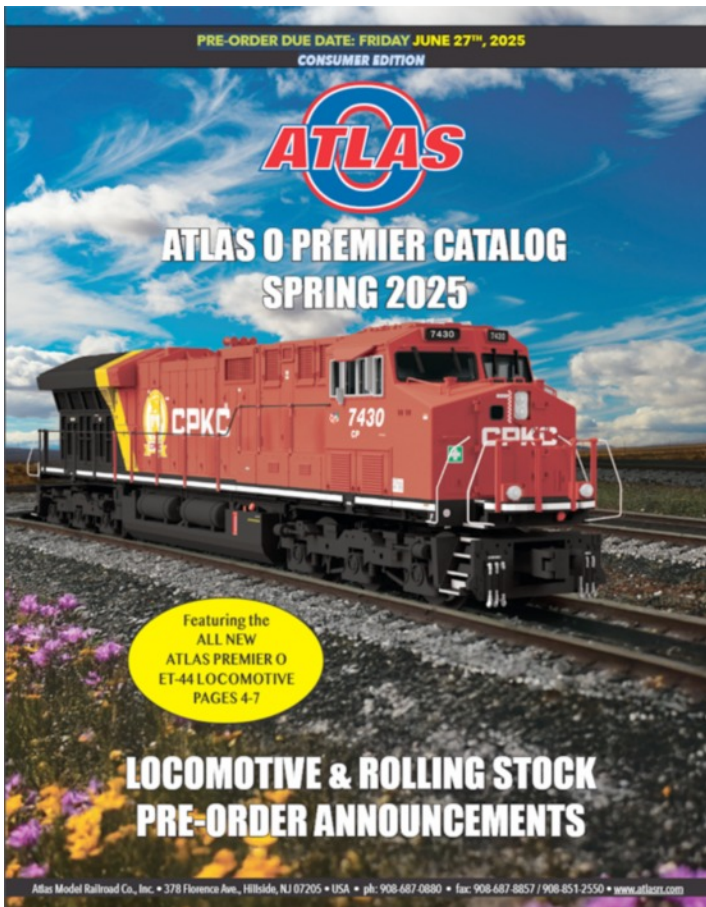


New paint schemes for O Premiere SD40-2 Locomotives.

Offering better reliability and lower maintenance costs than the higher powered SD-45, EMD's SD40-2 enjoyed a long production run of 3,100 units. The 3,000 horsepower diesel was the primary motive power for many railroads throughout the 1970's and 80's. Introduced on January 1, 1972, the SD40-2 had become the best-selling 6-axle road switcher in history by December 31, 1978. One of the most striking features of the EMD workhorse was its long "back porch" or decking that extended in front and behind the locomotive's cab.

These porches differentiated the SD40-2 from its earlier cousin, the SD35 and were the result of the SD40-2's requirement for a longer frame, which helped increase the locomotive's tractive effort.

Select samples shown below.



Check out all their products on their Website here.



NICKEL PLATE 48



Modeling satisfaction can be built on three simple propositions: Nickel Plate is the best railroad; Berkshires are the best engines and O Scale/1:48 is the best, most satisfying, scale. Put them together and you have nickelplate48.com, a website and forum for furthering Nickel Plate railroading and models in O Scale.

Nickelplate48.com will go live by the end of June. It will provide a place to gather and exchange information about NKP O Scale, to provide a platform for buying/selling and trading NKP O Scale models and to further cooperation on Nickel Plate O Scale parts and projects.

Thanks to the efforts of a core group of Nickel Plate O Scalers, we have a variety of O Scale parts to detail and upgrade O Scale Berkshires and other NKP models. These parts will be listed on the Website, with instructions how to order. Notes, stories and want ads to buy and sell NKP O Scale will also be postable.

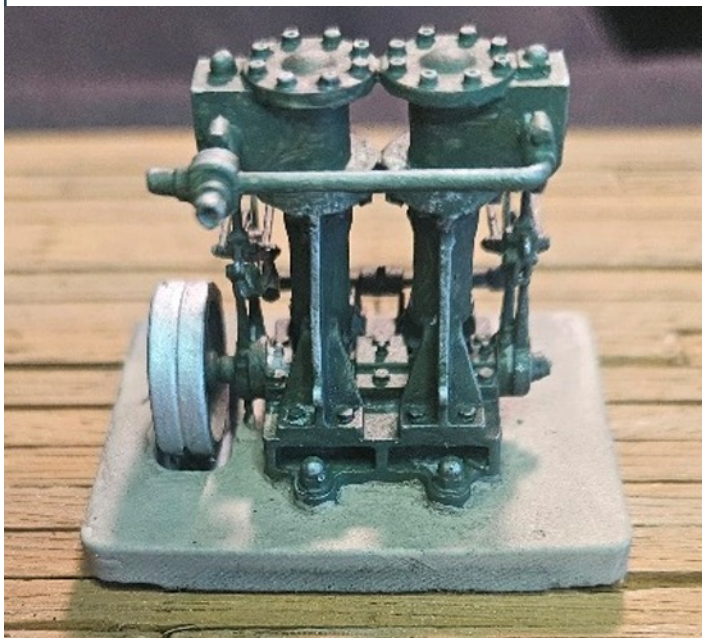
If you would like to be added to the Nickelplate48 group and receive updates, in addition to access to the website, send an email to the address below. You may also provide the names and email addresses for other modelers who should be notified about the group and the Website. You do not have to be a Nickel Plate modeler, a Berkshire fan or an O Scaler. It is enough that you are interested or curious.

This will all be informal. There will be no officers, dues or any other structure. It is just us. The website will be accessible. Anyone can join the group; we are always looking for converts to Nickel Plate, to Berkshires and to O Scale. So sign up or sign up your friends.

Communicate your sign-ups, comments and questions through David Vaughn at NKPOS2R@gmail.com.

Volunteers and ideas welcome. Thanks.

New from Rusty Rail. RRSP-O-27 - is the same dual for the HO folks, but printed in O scale. This is a one piece steam engine that is 3D printed. It would be great in any business you have that needs to be steam powered. Also, would make a great load for a flat car. Or would be great as old equipment in a factory or shop that converted to another power source. The steam engine comes unpainted.



Also available are the following new figures:



'Farmer John'. Down at the local store getting supplies. Figure comes unpainted.

'Ranch Hand Hank'. This guy is great in any ranch or own at the General store to get supplies. A 3D printed figure comes unpainted.



'Fireman Fred'. This guy will be great in a engine house. Figure comes unpainted.

[See all their products on their Website.](#)



New from [Model Tech Studios LLC](#).

Railroad Worker Series. Busy Working for your Railroad.

The porter #2 and his luggage cart.



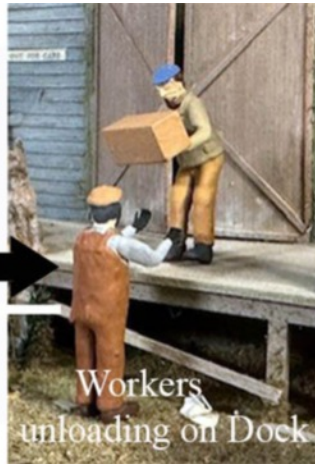
The porter, #1, loaded with luggage.

O Scale Figure Warehouse Workers Unloading Truck or Loading Dock Painted Set. The perfect set of workers "In action" unloading or loading a truck or loading dock scene. Finished Set of O scale Figures to make your scenes come alive for the busy workday

Create a Loading / Unloading Scene



Workers unloading Truck



Workers unloading on Dock

See their Website for all their O scale products.



New from All Nation Line: All Nation EMD Flex-I-Coil (Single) With 40" Wheels UNASSEMBLED Kit PN#627AN This truck is one variation of the EMD Flex-I-Coil Truck utilized on switchers such as the SW 1500. This new kit is 3D printed using 4 grades of filaments that include TPU, PETG, PLA, ABS and is an easy to assemble operational truck without power.



This truck kit can also accommodate various All Nation transmissions for powering your locomotive. For complete instructions on doing the assembly, please see our video on the All Nation Line Website. Let us know your color preference or we will just send what we have in stock.



Shop now for the All Nation EMD Flex-I-Coil Truck Kit.

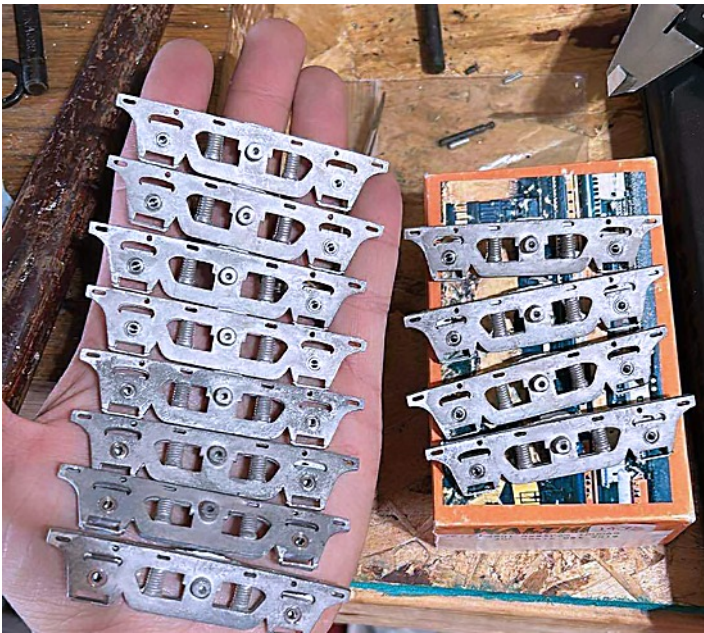


From James Schultz and his Avery Shops: Nystrom truck \$120.00 per pair.

Ball bearing equipped Nystrom trucks. Direct replacements for your Walthers Milwaukee Road passenger cars.



Efficient and ready to roll! Every truck is drilled and ball bearings installed for the most efficient rolling truck possible. They are very smooth and require no maintenance. Two 1/2", 6-32 screws are



included so they are truly direct replacements. Cars will roll with the slightest push.

Another weak point these trucks suffered from was the tiny self tapping screw used to attach the bolster to the side frames. I saw this point fail more than once. This has been remedied with a 1/2" stainless steel 2-56 screw. I drill through the side frame and into the main spring so that the new screw has plenty of real estate to grab on to. You will never have another Nystrom truck fall apart again.

They will come fully painted in your choice of black, silver or grey depending on era or car type you wish to represent. They will come in custom boxes with foam so you won't have to worry about them getting damaged in route.

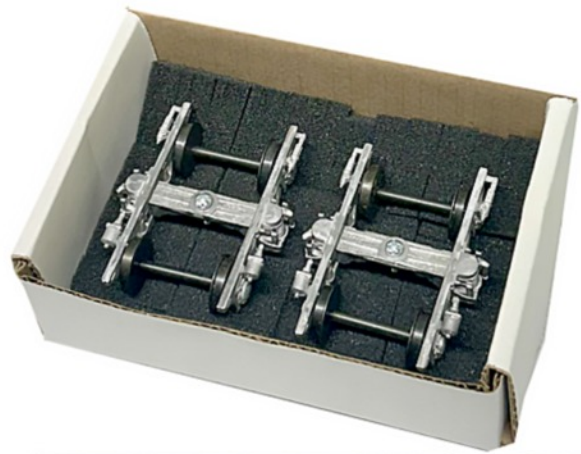
I am also offering a trade in for Nystrom trucks. If you have a pair still in the box (and in relatively good shape – I will require photos) then I will knock off \$15.00 per pair of trucks you wish to trade in. For example. You want 3 pairs and you have 3 pairs to trade in.

3 pairs of trucks: \$360.00

3 pairs of trade in: \$45.00

Total: \$315.00

So please utilize it if you can! I am always looking for more. Shipping will ALWAYS be free in the lower 48. No matter if you buy 1 or 10. I will ship USPS (speedee delivery for those in the Midwest) and they will be packed accordingly.



Please note that there may be a delay with some trucks as I am currently building them at a rate of 6-8 per week and then time is needed to paint each pair once ordered. I currently have about 50 pair in the works with more to come with trade ins. So please be patient with me during this time!

Also note that you will be supporting me as I expand into the custom passenger car realm in the future. So every order truly helps my endeavors!

Please, If you have questions regarding this, don't hesitate to contact me at: E70Schultz@gmail.com

Or through phone at: 641-583-2247. Message or call.



Roger Lewis from [Wasatch Model Company](http://WasatchModelCompany.com) sent us some new productions pictures taken at the factory in May of the new California Zephyr cars (see photos on next page.

[Contact Roger directly for information.](#)



Below is a listing of Lake States Railway Historical Association's latest uploads. We continue to add photos to existing galleries. As a reminder, the best way to find the most recent additions to existing galleries when viewing in smugmug is to go to the gallery you wish to view, perform a search for a word you know will appear in every image's metadata (e.g. the collection's name, or the accession number such as "024", then when the results appear, select "Sort by Newest". This will force the most recent uploads to the top of the search results.

We scanned a few more John Endler negatives as follows:

DW&P added to SOO/GTW/DWP gallery (9 images) at this link:
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/John-F-Endler-Collection/SOO-GTW-DWP>

Tex-Mex added to MP/T&P/MKT/KCS/SLSF/TM existing gallery (9 images) at this link:
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/John-F-Endler-Collection/MP-TP-MKT-KCS-StLSW>

Last year, Ray Buhrmaster donated some miscellaneous prints from F.R. Ritzman (these are older locomotives and a few train wrecks that Ritzman perhaps borrowed the negatives to print from many years ago) and several cabinet cards. We have scanned all these plus one cabinet card that was received in the Carl & Barb Ulrich Collection, and a few real photo postcards donated by Dick Goddard several years ago. They may be viewed as follows:

Ritzman prints (30 images) added to existing Ritzman Prints gallery:
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/FR-Ritzman-Collection/Prints>

20 cabinet card images added to existing Cabinet Cards gallery at this link:
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/Miscellaneous/Cabinet-Cards>

2 RPPC images added to existing Real Photo Postcards Gallery at this link:
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/Miscellaneous/Real-Photo-Postcards-RPPC>

In the Bill Kuba Collection, we continue to plug along with action views, this time the NKP (9 steam

action images added to existing gallery) at this link:
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/William-S-Kuba-Collection/NKP-Steam-Locomotives-and-Trains>

The Bill Robertson Collection is now complete. The last all-new gallery to be added is the Waterloo Cedar Falls & Northern interurban railroad located in Iowa (50 images):

<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/Bill-Robertson-Collection/Traction-WCFN>

We are rounding the home stretch on the Ed DeRouin Collection. The following galleries are all-new:

Burlington Northern Program (151 images curated by Ed himself, selected as his best for a program he would present on the BN):

<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/Ed-DeRouin-Collection/BN-Program>

Burlington Northern 1970-1973 (240 images):
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/Ed-DeRouin-Collection/BN-1970-1973>

Burlington Northern 1974-1978 (215 images):
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/Ed-DeRouin-Collection/BN-1974-1978>

C&O added to existing B&O/C&O/Chessie gallery (55 images) and may be viewed at this link:
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/Ed-DeRouin-Collection/BO-CO-Chessie>

Southern added to existing WAB/NKP/N&W gallery (43 images) and may be viewed at this link:
<https://www.lakestatesarchive.org/Ed-DeRouin-Collection/WAB-NKP-NW>

We'll be back in about a month with more uploads to announce.



New from [Sunset Models Inc.](https://www.sunsetmodels.com/) We're excited to announce another diesel project at Sunset Models / 3rd Rail: the one and only EMD GP-30, coming to 2 and 3 rail O scale!

We're still early in the design phase, but as we all know, the 1970's till today made the GP-30 a legendary workhorse across North America. From Santa Fe to Union Pacific, C&O, Southern, and

beyond, these second-generation road switchers were instantly recognizable with their signature stepped cab roofs and 2,250 hp performance.

Below are just a sampling from their Website for possible road names.



Here's a look at what's coming under the hood:

- Multiple Road Numbers
- ABS Body with Fixed Pilots
- Ball Bearing Axle Journals
- Smooth Horizontal Can Motor Drive
- All Wheels Powered — Only Powered Units
- 3-Rail: ERR Cruise, TMCC, Railsounds & Smoke
- 2-Rail: ESU Loksound 5.0, DC/DCC with Dual Speakers
- Extreme Detail Lighted Cab Interior

This will be a built-to-order production — no extras, no reruns in the near future. If this model is on your radar, now's the time to get on board.

Follow the link below to reserve your GP-30 today!

<https://www.3rdrail.com/reservation.html#GP30>



New products from [Berkshire Car Shop](#).

These O scale trolley are for the different variations of the Kansas City PCC cars that were purchased by Toronto and later by Philadelphia SEPTA.

One is the Bicentennial paint scheme which featured different state names.

One is the Gulf Oil paint scheme.



One is a SEPTA car that was still in Toronto colors.



These will be body kits which include: body, seats, floor, roof details. Pole and trucks are additional based on configuration. Beautiful, accurate decal sets are available for the cars.



Contact the Berkshire Car Shop at berkshirecarshop@comcast.net for further details.



From Lou Houlemarde at [Central Locomotive Works](#).

The new Central Locomotive Works SD39 and SD38 etchings are processing. The next build order will be for the SD38-2, the "long range" IC SD40A, and the CP SD40-2F. There is still time to order these models, but the window is closing.

The SD40-2, SD40-2W and SD45-2 models are not scheduled at this time due to the lack of interest.

Contact Central for more info at clwusa@verizon.net or call 760 221-5558 M-F 8:00A - 5:00P.

The O Scale Resource July/August 2025

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2025 March O Scale Meet Notes

By Brad Kowal

Hopefully, by now, everyone should've made it home from the March O Scale Meet. Feedback from the meet has been positive. One of our largest vendors reported record sales, there was a lot of brass passing through the exit and we saw a number of new faces both as attendees as well as vendors. We had 2 new layouts on tour, the Model Contest Judges were pleased with the Contest participation and many modelers enjoyed the Saturday Evening Social. It was noted by many however, that the crowd wasn't as thick as it was last year. At the end of the Meet we had a headcount of about 600, which was down a little over 100 from last year.



Normally this would be a point of concern, however there is more data to consider. Tables were sold out early this year, in February. We saw a number of first-time attendees registering, new vendors reserving tables and past attendees who haven't attended since Covid, return to the meet. As we approached the meet weekend, we had a number of table holders cancel due to illness. After getting the word out that tables were available again, they were sold out for a second time. That was followed by more table cancellations, again due to illness, before being sold out for a final time.

On the hotel side, we had 418 room nights sold after the initial adjustment from the ill table holders cancelling their reservations. The hotel reported 33 others canceled their reservations at the last minute. The hotel did not collect any information as to why, however since that high number of last-minute cancellations is unprecedented, it would probably be safe to suggest it was illness related.

Generally speaking, roughly half the attendance is modelers from the greater Chicagoland area. Given the number of table holders that canceled, along with the last-minute hotel cancellations, it's easy to see how we can be down 100. This committee is not interested in talking something up that we do not believe. We insist on looking at the data and proceeding accordingly. At this time, we don't feel the need to be concerned and will proceed with securing a contract for 2027. While 600 is a lot of folks for many meets, we recognize that the expectations for this meet are higher and we wish to do whatever we can to maximize participation, not only for our vendors, but also for the enjoyment of those who participate and for the overall health of "O" Scale 2-Rail. For many of us, the March Meet is a Family Reunion and we wish to keep this going indefinitely.

Moving forward, the dates for 2026 are March 19-22, 2026. Table Holders who wish to have the same tables next year, should register now either online or through the mail using the form on the flyer.

In an effort to obtain the 1000-1200 attendance we had of pre-covid, we're going to have to do a number of things. We have to reach out to the newer "O" Scalers that haven't been exposed to an "O" Scale Meet yet. The most cost-effective way to do so is via social media. Facebook is the giant here. Ken Burney's "O Scale Two Rail and P48 Railroading" Group has almost 3,000 members. "O" Scale Trains has over 2,000 members, "Only the Finest in O-scale Railroading" almost 900 and "All 2 Rail O Scale Model Railroading 2,600 members.

These groups are highly active and a lot of information is passed on a daily basis AND by modelers who haven't attended a meet. This committee can post information on a daily basis; however, if current attendees and dealers would post as well, it would most likely have a greater impact.

Vendors and Manufacturers should be posting information on social media on a regular basis anyway. Why we don't see more vendors and manufacturers post is beyond me. It's free, it's allowed and always better to receive the information from the original source, rather than from someone reporting "what they heard". We understand that some folks have fears of using Facebook. Rest assured, there is nothing there to really fear. You can make up birthdates, etc. if you're sensitive about giving up information. Facebook is really an asset to the Model Railroad Community as well as the Railfan Community. You can use it just for those two purposes and not get involved in anything controversial such as politics, etc..

Another thing we need to do is prepare ourselves to invite modelers from other scales. We can't really do that now, and in most cases, as we have little to show them. As an "O" Scaler, we can walk into the trading hall and drool over green, orange, blue and yellow boxes. But to someone newly considering "O" Scale, that means nothing. I think what we need to do is build a 4'x30" switching layout. When someone potentially new to "O" Scale walks up, we hand them the throttle and let them see how nicely "O" Scale works. We can pack a lot of fun into that 4'x30" space and almost everybody exposed should be able to visualize something of that size in their basement. Round and round layouts provide a function as well, however a switching layout takes up less space and provides for more and longer entertainment. How we execute this suggestion will require a lot of discussion.

Happy Modeling!

The March O Scale Meet Committee

And speaking of great O scale shows, don't miss the upcoming Indianapolis O Scale Show 2025!

Indianapolis O Scale Show 2025

2 Rail O Scale Swap Meet

O Scale 2 Rail/P48, Narrow Gauge/On30, O Scale Traction and 3 Rail Scale

Friday September 19, 3:00 to 7:00 PM

Dealer setup September 20, 12:00PM

Saturday September 20, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Limited trading tables still available.

Cost of admission is \$20.00 per person, spouse and children under 16 free.

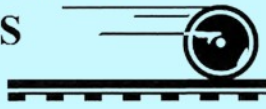
La Quinta Inn & Suites Indianapolis South, 5120 Victory Dr, Indianapolis, IN 46203

For More Information: Call: 317 435-8378

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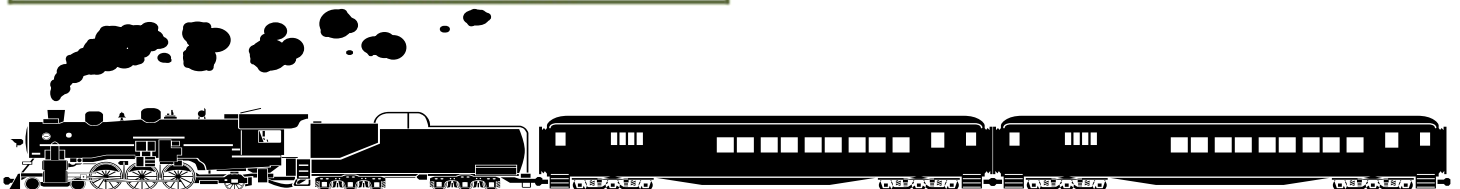
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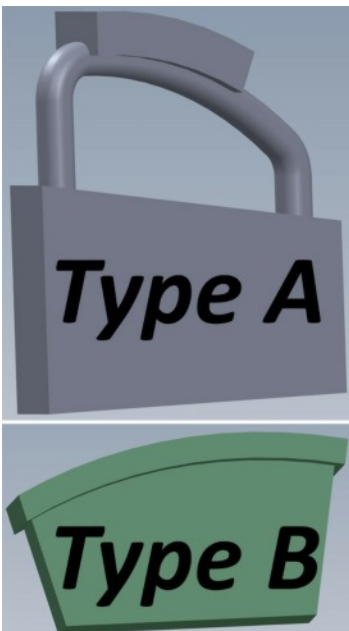
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**MODERN / STREAMLINE
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Coach seats for modern / streamline passenger cars. Two arm rest styles. See photos.

You will receive 40 seats and 80 arm rests. This is a bulk pack for builders and only available as such.

\$25.00

**40 seats and
80 arm rests**

STREET LIGHT KITS



Common North American-style street lights used in many communities. Fits popular modeling eras 1890s to present as they are now they are back in historic districts, but made from metal. The standard globe was found all over the country. The fancy globe was measured from an actual top in Elmhurst, IL.

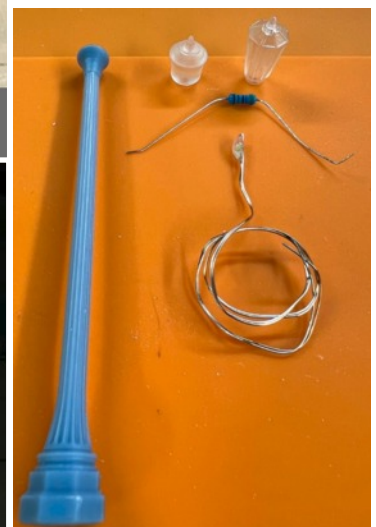


Choice of globes, standard or fancy and choice of LED color. Cold white for modern lighting and Warm white for pre-sodium-vapor lamp / LED lighting, 1970's and earlier.

Package includes:

- Five poles
- Five globes (Standard or Fancy)
- Five LEDs (Warm or Cold White)
- Five 9V to 14V resistors

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A Fleet for Operations 4:

The Elephant in the Room; Lowering Atlas

By Brian Scafe

At least I can say Atlas is (in general dimensions anyway) pretty consistent; indeed consistent enough that Kadee include a conversion bush intended for use with AtlasO freightcars with each pair of their trucks. I say "consistent" because the conversions I've done pretty much bring the last step, the shimming of either IM or Kadee trucks off the stock body bolster, down to a matter of two or three #8 washers, about half the height of Kadee's bush or less. That gives us something of a very noticeable improvement; in some cases we are getting around a scale foot out of the deal. Getting there, though, isn't quite so consistent, as we shall now explore.

Photo 1



A little investigation and that height can be found in two places. First, the Atlas coupler box itself. The top of the box is very thick compared to the Kadee, effectively pushing the horizontal centerline of the coupler down. Second are either lugs or an overly thick mounting pad on the frame. Screwing that thick box to the stock pad or lugs brings the box itself well below its proper position leaving lots of space between the top of the box and the bottom of the end of the car (**Photos 1 & 2**).

Photo 2

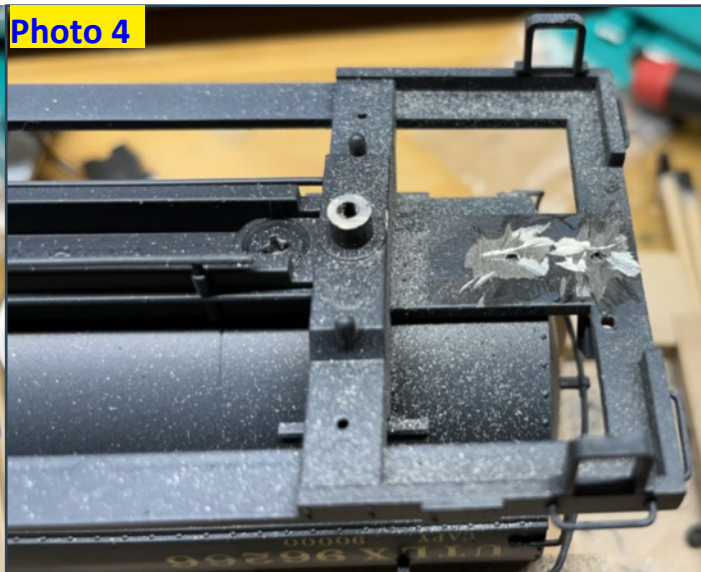
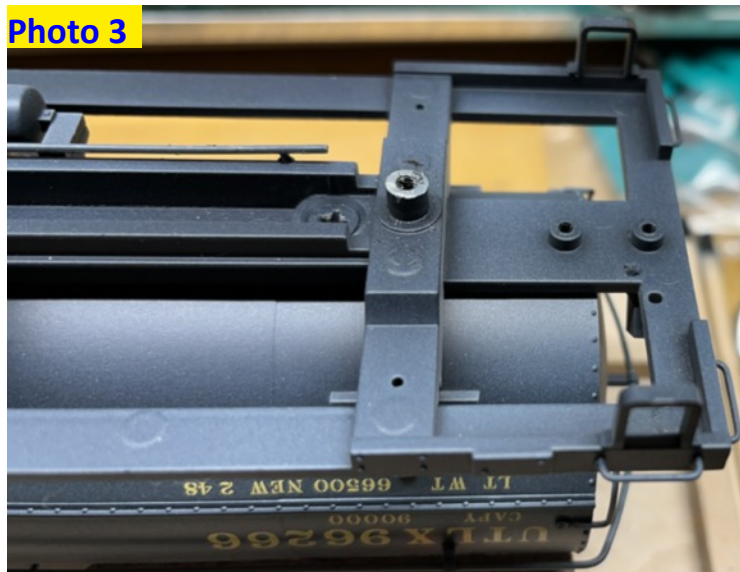


The reason for this is actually pretty simple. It allows for the hi-rail truck and the frame itself to be re-used without modification; just change the wheels and screw on the coupler boxes during the manufacturing process and call it "2-rail".

Addressing the thickness hidden in the box is easy. We simply replaced the clunky Atlas box with our standard Kadee box, either the stock one for non-cushion cars or the #819 extended box for cushioned cars. While the 819 is perhaps a bit plain for some tastes, it dimensionally is an improvement over the oversized Atlas and eliminates that thickness we need to get rid of in exactly the same manner as the stock (non-cushion) Kadee box.

More involved and sometimes requiring more creativity are the stand-offs often found on the frames, whether

lug or pad. Lugs, such as on tank cars and hoppers, are pretty easily (and admittedly brutally) dealt with using a Dremel and a cut-off wheel (**Photos 3 & 4**). On many of the "Trainman" range, the frames are plastic so a good rasp or sanding stick will shave the pads off. Unfortunately (or fortunately, if you enjoy such things) a few of the so-called "Master" series boxcar frames are best machined to get rid of the pad. Recently, Atlas has added a "Premier" range; if my sole example is any indication that range really is little changed from its predecessor MTH product and can be treated the same way.



No matter the method called for, the goal is to get the top of the Kadee box up to the bottom of the end; no gap, right where it belongs on the prototype.

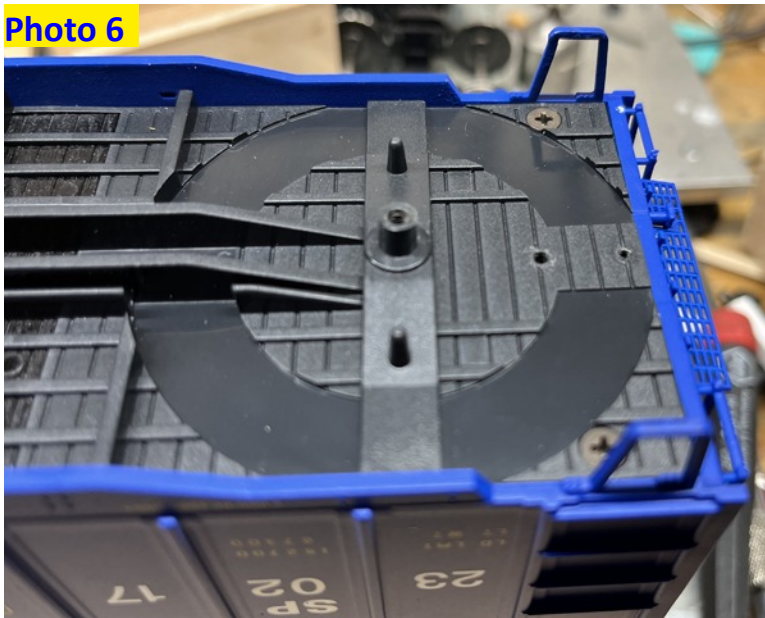
We'll be looking at a couple examples of these cars in some detail in this installment, so let's start with one of the easier ones.

Trainman 50' ACF boxcar

This car is an excellent compliment to the Weaver FMC version of the same car, both born of the (largely perceived, as it turned out) need for basic house-cars in the early 1980s to replace the plethora of worn-out 40' cars still in interchange. These things were banged out in the hundreds, first to build TTX's initial Railbox fleet and then as the stars of the "incentive-per-diem" boxcar replacement program, hence the term "IPD cars". We're lucky to have models of two versions to work with, but the Trainman one needs pretty much a repeat of the Weaver conversion we looked at last time.

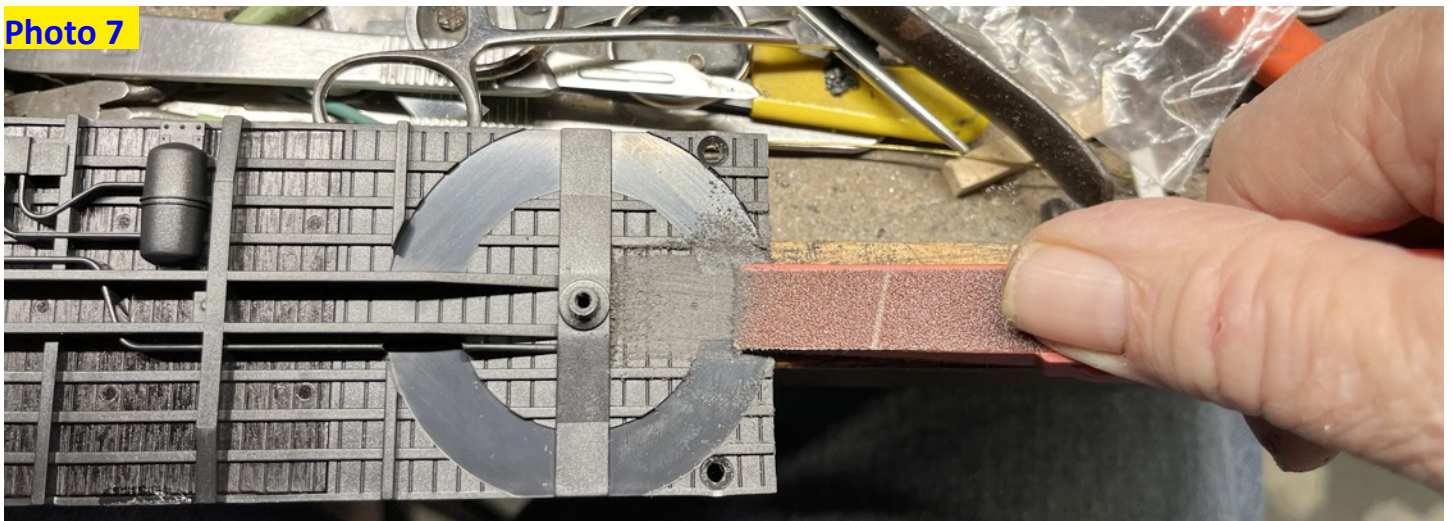


This should be pretty familiar ground by now, one of the easiest of Atlas' to address. First, flip it over, pull the old trucks and the couplers. If you've never dealt with the Atlas coupler box before, the cover comes off with a pair of small screwdrivers carefully wedged as shown in **Photo 5**, then gently pried back until the tab of the cover clears the slot in the back. There is a tendency for it all to go flying, so be gentle and keep a finger on the lid. Once free, lift the cover, use a pick or small screwdriver to lift the spring, then slide the coupler out of the box.

Photo 6

Looking inside the box, then, you'll see a pair of small phillips-head screws that hold the box to the underframe/floor of the car. Undo them and set the boxes aside (**Photo 6**).

Mark the brake end with a marker and the floor is ready to remove by undoing the screws at the corners. The pad is cleverly disguised by being scribed resembling the surrounding floor bits and, being a plastic floor, is easily knocked down with a sanding wand and some reasonably coarse-grit sandpaper (**Photo 7**). Test-fit as you go so the result is level and flush with the bottom of the end of the car (sounds familiar by now, doesn't it?) Once you're satisfied, assemble the Kadees in their boxes for the non-cushioned versions or using an

Photo 7

819 box for the cushioned, screw the floor back on the car (**Photo 8**). Stack three #8 washers on the bolster lug, cut the lug flush with the stack, then drill, tap (2-56), and mount the boxes (**Photo 9**). Kadee's truck will screw on, using their supplied screw (**Photo 10 on next page**).

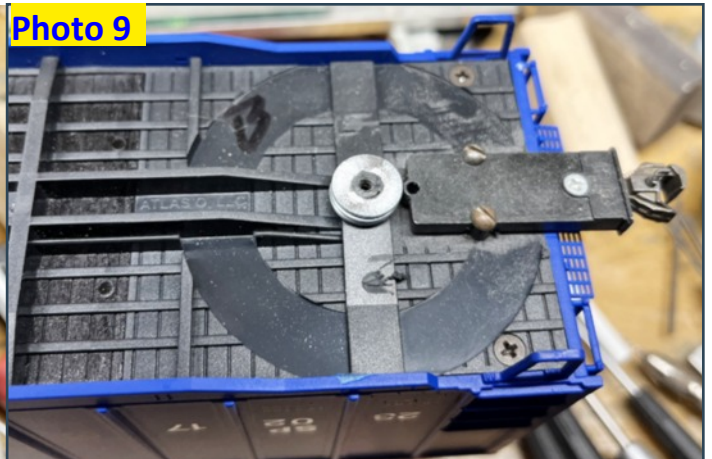
Photo 8**Photo 9**

Photo 10**Photo 11**

Then it's time to check the car-height with your gage (**Photo 11**), adjust the washer stacks if needed, then weather it up to suit. **Photo 12** shows you the result. Nothing difficult and the procedure should really be starting to sound almost boringly predictable at this point in the proceedings.

Photo 12

Hah! On the Other Hand!

The Atlas "Master" range has a 50' Pullman Standard box in a variety of different configurations from the standard ol' transition-era PS-1 up through a number of updated versions equipped with cushioned underframes, short ladders, and no roofwalks. Not only is it one of the most useful cars Atlas did but one of the most challenging to lower. The challenge is the coupler pad cast into the white-metal underframe, a full 0.070" thick below the end of the car.

First I'll show the "right" way to do that pad in, being the use of a milling machine. Mine are time-honored old Unimats, but any decent mill will do the job neatly. For those of you who have such things and know how to use them, it's a pretty easy job even though the metal is pretty gummy and inconsistent. The problem with this technique is simply the scope of this series; we're aimed for the "normal" modeler who has come to us from the other scales, scales where cracking out machine tools isn't exactly mainstream. That being the case, I'll show you a couple ways we can approach this task, but it's going to be a little different from what many of you are used to.

Begin by careful disassembly of the car. Pull the trucks, open the coupler boxes with a couple small screwdrivers, and lift the box in the same way we did the Trainman ACF box earlier in this installment. You'll have to clear some minor bits here and there, such as the uncoupling levers and brake hoses, then undo the screws holding the floor/frame to the body found deep in those holes in the floor. Use a permanent marker to mark the brake end of the floor as you lift it out, then undo the screws holding the frame to the floor. Mark the brake end on the frame, then lift that clear and set it aside. You should now have a stripped metal floor to work with.

Machining

I fixtured the floor by clamping to a piece of steel bar-stock (three clamps unevenly spaced makes a stiff structure that doesn't vibrate). The bar is then clamped in the vise on the mill with the floor surface referenced to the jaws of the vise, assuming you've done your setup of the vise correctly and the top surfaces of the vise are parallel with the horizontal axes of the mill and orthogonal to the axis of rotation of the tool itself. **Photo 13** gives you an idea of the setup. I would usually use a two-flute end-mill for this, but the metal is so inconsistent and frankly gummy that I erred on the side of tool strength, used a four-flute, light cuts, and slowed the feed rate. This isn't either precision or production work. We can argue setups forever, so let us say it doesn't really matter except for being a secure, solid, and safe setup, using an appropriate speed and feed for the chosen tool,



Photo 13

and understanding the material is not very nice.

On that last one, I mention it not as a slam so much as a safety note. I've done well over a dozen frames and the metallurgy is so "casual" one might need two rough-cuts and a finish cut to nail and the next might need four passes before the finish cut. Resign yourself to taking your time and feeling your way. Wear a face-shield, too, just in case. I did have a tankcar frame literally disintegrate from zinc-pest as soon as I touched it with a rotating tool.

Some Tapping Thoughts

Anyway, once the pad is milled off flush with the floor, re-assemble the frame to the floor and do the same sort of patterning as with the Trainman 50-footer to drill and tap 2-56 for the coupler box, and finish the assembly of the car. A note about tapping; here the material will conspire to make you earn your pay. Tap this stuff using a #50 tap-drill and good quality HSS hand taps. Some tap lubrication is a must with this stuff. A discrete drop of oil will do nicely; too much makes an unnecessary mess. You absolutely must follow the practice of taking a turn, backing up to break the cutting away from the material, take another turn, back up, and repeat. If you just twist away at it like driving a screw, without breaking and clearing the cutting by backing, sooner or later you'll bind up the tap and snick it off, I guarantee it. Trust me, you do not want to deal with broken taps in this stuff. You can do this, but you aren't tapping plastic here.

Relieving the 819 box

Another method for the more mainstream skillset is this one, useable with the #819 box on a cushion-underframe car. Since there are no internals to the rear of the #819 coupler box, the opportunity is there to straddle the pad by removing a bit of the lid and cutting back any minor features that might interfere, such as the insides of the lugs through which the mounting screws are inserted.

Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17



Photo 18



Go ahead and assemble the box and coupler, then we'll measure the rear of the box-lid forward 0.700". Scribe across the box there, as shown in **Photo 14**. Neatly cut that rear chunk away, relieve the back of the box a little bit, and relieve the insides of the side-lugs where the mounting screws go, test-fitting as you go. **Photo 15** gives you a notion of the form we're after. You can see the idea now; we're going to straddle and cover the pad, the front of the lid still bearing on the car end, and leveled up in the back using styrene strip if you cut away a little too much of the rear of the box in your enthusiasm for it all. **Photo 16** shows the leveling shim in place after test-fitting the box over the pad, **Photo 17** the new mounting holes drilled and tapped by the instructions in the section above, and

Photo 19

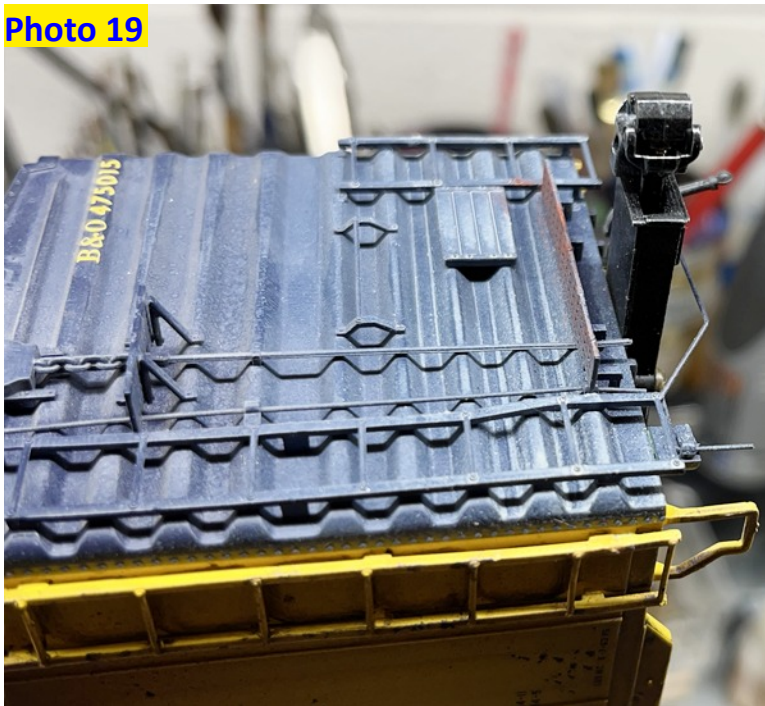


Photo 18 the box mounted and level, covering the pad nicely. **Photo 19** is important, showing you the relationship of the box to the bottom of the car end, lid nicely tight and no signs of the mischief we've indulged in underneath to dodge the pad.

The standard box used for non-cushioned versions of this car won't straddle, so now is a good time to present a friend of mine's solution, albeit a messy brutal one. Like many messy brutal solutions, it's a good one, though. Once I got well down this path on our ops club's roster, others in the group started down this slippery slope as well. As Ken Kime remarked about the difference, "Once you see it, you can't unsee it!" and we have been comparing notes and exchanging techniques ever since. Ken gets credit for our third technique of doing in these white-metal pads, grinding with a Dremel and sanding drums (**Photo 20**).

Photo 20



Again, disassemble completely as we did for machining. You can rough-grind them flush with the underside of the floor. Steady motion and care using a coarse drum gets the majority, then either a fine drum or a grinding stone cleans up the finish a bit. Too fine and this stuff loads up the drum or stone so take your time, go carefully and neatly, and let the grinder do the work rather than pushing down into the material. There will be more of a mess than by machining, so be prepared to clean up afterwards, stay away from electrics and electronics, and I'd suggest a good respirator/mask. Once you're happy and the box sits up level, flush, and tight, drill and tap your mounting holes as discussed above.

On to the Finish Line

The hard part is over, and these cars are the most challenging I've encountered in the Atlas ranges. If you've stuck it out, you'll have mastered some new useful skills such as drilling and tapping white-metal, hand-grinding with some elegance, layout with rules and scribes, and even a little machining if you go that route. You can, of course, get an advanced modeler friend to do it for you (or better yet teach you in a hands-on situation) or you could even take your stack of stripped frames and a credit card to a machine shop. Still, the challenge is met, however you choose to do so, and there isn't anything outrageous or bizarre to learn here.

I'll also mention that Atlas isn't very consistent regarding how their coupler boxes are mounted on the house-cars in the Master range, and we have yet to touch on things like tanks and hoppers. While the 60' auto-parts box presents similar challenges, the 53' Evans box uses an oddball separate pad screwed to lugs and is far easier to deal with. You might be feeling pretty cocky now and thinking I'm getting repetitious, but I'm making a point. Experience and elegance comes with repetition (**Photo 21 next page**) and you will soon be able to determine your approach on a case-by-case basis. There is no consistency with hi-rail product.

Photo 21



Moving on, place a couple #8 washers over that lug on the body bolster, carve off the remainder flush (**Photo 22**), mount your Kadee or Intermountain trucks as appropriate, check the height with your coupler-height gage, and adjust the trucks if needed. Yeah, these were a bit involved and even a bit daunting at first blush but, if **Photo 23 and 24** are any indication, the difference is certainly worth it.

You've gotten the hang of it by now and a good understanding of the visual improvement that placing coupler boxes where they

belong, then adjusting truck height to hit the gage, gets you with these techniques.

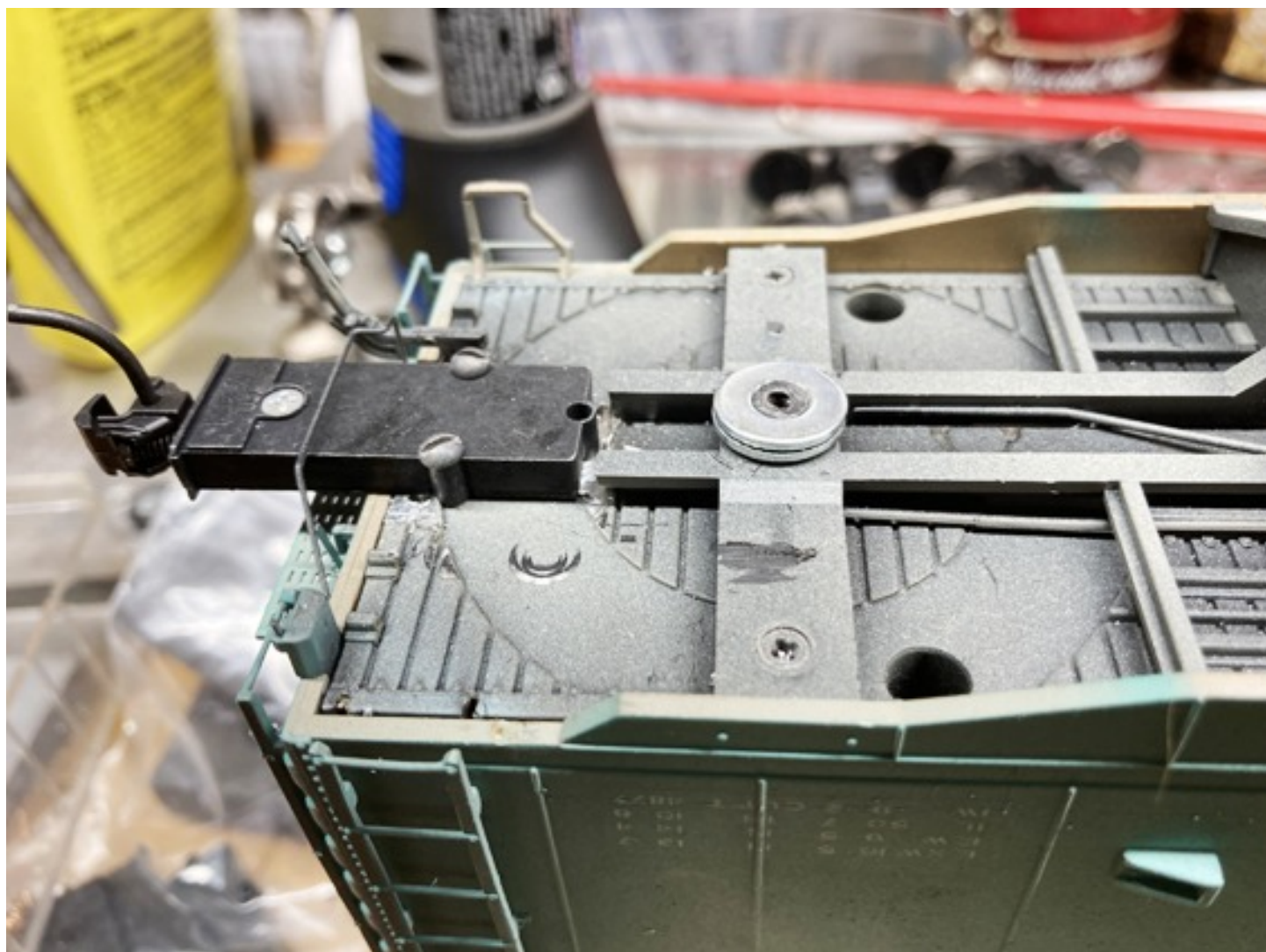


Photo 23



Next time, we'll change gears and look at various cars grouped not by manufacturer but by timeperiod or purpose. We'll look at several steam/transition era cars next, all from various sources, and look at them more in overview than in nauseating detail because you are getting pretty good at this.

Photo 24



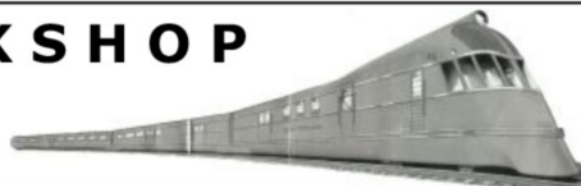


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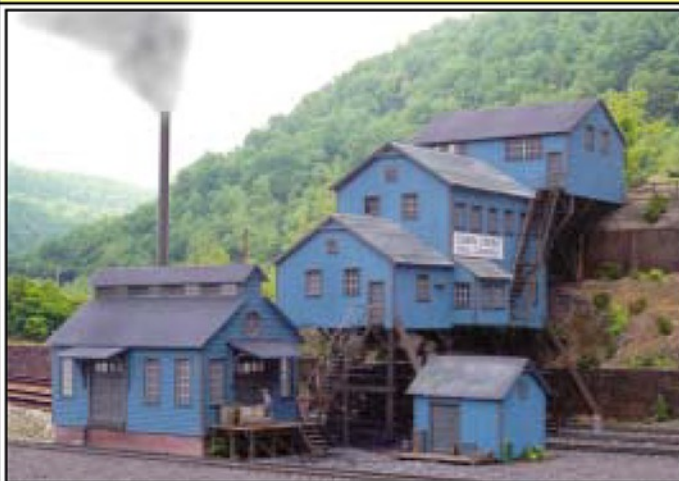
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A Trip Through O Scale Modeling

Bob Anson's Remembrances

By Glenn Guerra



Recently Rose and I went to see Bob Anson. Rose's dad was Joe Fischer, the custom passenger car builder, and she is always happy to see how people cherish her dad's work. Bob is showing her a couple of cars made by Joe for Tony Ambrose. Bob did custom painting for Tony and acquired these cars from the Ambrose estate.

For the last 5 years, Rose and I have been spending winters at her house in Florida. We migrate to my house in Wisconsin for the summers. This past winter I met some of the O Scalers in the Jacksonville, Florida area. They have a nice informal group and meet every Friday at someone's house. The meetings convene around 8:30 AM. Yes, we are early birds. The meetings consist of some layout work and conversations. Then we all go out to lunch. Two of the group are Bob Anson and his brother Tom. Bob has an O Scale layout and his interest in O Scale is interesting. I thought you would like to see what he is doing, but first a little about Bob.

Bob retired from the US Air Force, doing ground support for the planes, in 1989. He is well known in model railroading as a custom painter. While in the Air Force he was painting Athearn HO Scale models for himself. As so often happens, someone wanted their model painted, and soon Bob was doing lots of painting for other people. At this time Bob's work was primarily HO scale. Around 1990, Bob was living in the Memphis, Tennessee area and he met an O Scaler by the name of Lou Ertz.

Lou kept showing Bob the virtues of O Scale and, before long, Bob was convinced.

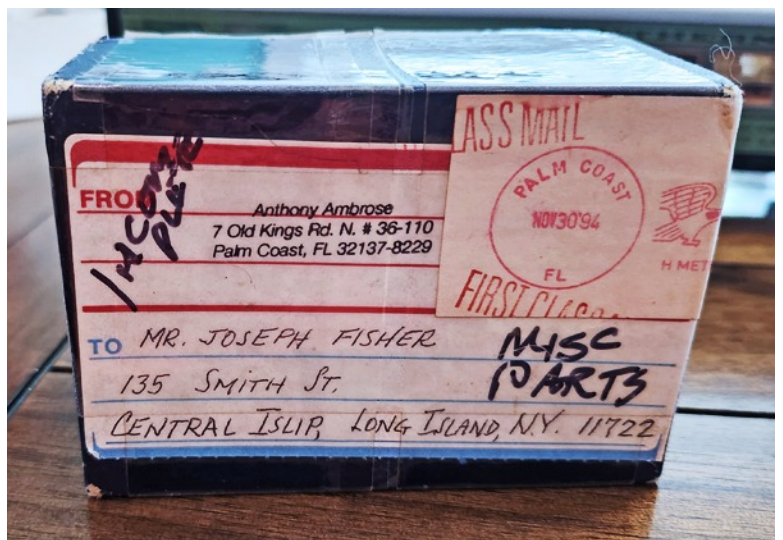
Bob's custom painting included factory paint jobs for Overland, Pecos River Brass, River Raisin Models, Hobby Hill Models, and Beaver Creek. While doing this, Bob was invited along with Lou Ertz to an O Scale show in Texas run by Larry Muir who was one of the people involved in Hobby Hill Models. At one time this Texas show rivaled the Chicago O Scale show and all the big names in O Scale would attend. It was at this show Bob met many of the O Scale people and started doing work for them. One of these modelers was Tony Ambrose from Florida. Bob painted many of Tony's models for him. Tony was also a big customer of Joe Fischer the custom passenger car builder.

Bob's brother Tom is retired from the phone company and moved to Jacksonville many years ago. Basements are very rare in Florida so finding model railroad space was a concern. Tom found a house in a hilly area that had a small walk out basement. After a while, Bob moved in with Tom and they enlarged the basement to start their layouts. Tom has an HO scale layout in one half of the basement, and Bob has his O Scale layout in the other half.



This car was built and painted by Joe Fischer for Tony Ambrose. Bob acquired the car from the Ambrose estate.

Many modelers have a theme or prototype for their model railroads. These themes often express our interests or past experience. Bob's layout is no different and a theme for his layout is remembering all the great modelers. Bob has models, both rolling stock and structures, from many people that he has met over the years or known about. I enjoy talking to people like Bob about the modelers of the past and seeing the models is always a good conversation starter.



Some memorabilia from the Tony Ambrose estate.

I thought you would like to see models from some of the past modelers. I think the best way to do this is by having a photo of the model and in the caption we will talk about where it came from.



This car is from the Tony Ambrose estate and was built and painted by Joe Fischer. Bob has 6 of these cars and knows where 2 others are. He thinks there are 4 more somewhere and would be interested in knowing where.



Bob is not just a collector. He scratch built this depot many years ago.



Many of the buildings in this scene are Woodland Scenic or Menards buildings. At the right, the big gray mattress factory honors Larry Sokol, an O Scale modeler who passed away earlier this year.



Bob did a nice job with commercially available photo back drops. Look at the box car in the mattress factory. Everything behind the box car is a photo.



This building was scratch built by John Herrmann. Bob has 3 other buildings made by John Herrmann. The buildings were acquired through the popular auction services.



Look how the photo backdrop gives this scene so much depth.



Bob Smith started and owned Central Locomotive Works. He had a layout and this building was on his layout. Bob marks the buildings like this so he remembers where they came from. It is an elevated crossing guard tower.



This little building is a Clever Models building that you print and glue to card board or foam board. It has no texture but gives a great illusion of being made of stone.



Bob appreciates the work that goes into building and detailing models. Many of his models are in display cases or put away on shelves. This case is under the layout. While Bob and I were talking, he was getting some of the models out to tell me about them. We will take a look at a few of the models.



This is a brass model that was painted by Ray Priester. Bob really liked the unusual paint job and had to have the car. The lettering is hand painted on decal film and then applied to the model. Bob made a load for the car after he acquired it.



Bob acquired this early brass import car already painted. He made the load for it.



Bob has three of these cars and what gems they are. These were made in the 1970's by Bob Parri of Clifton, New Jersey. In the late 1970's he started making brass freight car kits and built up models. The brass cars were years ahead of their time and had complete brake rigging on the models. Today they are very collectable. This particular model came from the Tony Ambrose estate.



This car was a brass import from Hobby Hill Models. Bob did custom painting for them and painted this car. He also did the layout work for the decals and printed them on an Alps printer.



Lately, Bob has been working on some LaBelle kits like this one. Bob has 12 cars completed this far and has decided to part with them. [If you are interested click here to contact Bob.](#)



This model is scratch built in styrene by a local modeler by the name of Mike Stamey. Mike builds in all scales and just likes building. Bob has a few models made by Mike.



This car is a Pacific Limited brass import that Bob painted. Bob liked it because it was an unusual prototype with drop doors in the floor.



This is another scratch built car in styrene by Mike Stamey. Mike is a local modeler in the Jacksonville, Florida area. He painted this car. Bob has a few of Mike's cars and really likes his work.



This car was imported by Hobby Hill Models. Bob was their factory painter and painted this one for himself. The decals were made for the cars and Bob painted a few of them in this scheme.



In the 1930's WACO was a big name in aircraft manufacturing. Bob found a photo of a car load of crates just like you see them here. He decided to make a model like the photo.



This is a Bob Parri model, only this one was a kit that Bob assembled. The car is of brass construction. Bob painted and lettered this car.



When Bob saw this car he could not resist. Zoom in on this photo and look close at the lettering. This car is hand lettered. Bob acquired this model just as you see it with the load.



Lastly we have another model from the Tony Ambrose estate. Tony was a big customer of Bob and other custom builders. This particular model was painted by Dan Pantera. The model reminds Bob of two of his friends. Tony's railroad was called the Southern Cross.

I hope you enjoyed the look at some of Bob's models. He has accumulated some interesting models and it's fun to talk to him about them. Bob has notes on who made the model and how he acquired it. If you are doing similar things I would recommend keeping notes like this. With some information on the model and builder these models become timeless and much more appreciated.

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The Model Railroad Club of Toronto

By David MacLean

Photos by Dan Dawdy unless noted



A print from a newspaper article from the early 1950s showing some of the founding Club members which began in 1938.

A bit of history

The Club has a typical humble beginning in 1938 with the co-founders Borden Lilley and Harry Ebert setting up small layout in Harry's basement. Their dreams of having something of a grander space for their Club led them to secure space the next year on the 4th floor of Toronto's Union Station. As was typical in the early years of the hobby and especially so during the years of global conflict, they were able to scrounge up enough wood and wire to get things going. A close relationship with the New York Society of Model Engineers led to being able to acquire some code 172 steel rail which remained in service for many decades. Large bridges were fabricated, track laid, rolling stock built, locos fabricated, and public shows commenced. There is even a short video featuring a clip of the Union Station layout on a documentary produced in the 1940s called Canadian Railways at War.

After the cessation of hostilities in 1945, and with CNR and CPR business continuing to grow, more business space was needed at Union Station, so the Club was asked to vacate Union Station in December '45. With co-founder Borden Lilley involved in the commercial real estate business, he was able to secure the basement space in a factory district a few miles west of the downtown core. An ideal location with two long wide rooms formerly the test firing range for Bren machine guns built in the factory above for the war effort. A few truckloads of materials and layout parts were transported over to the Hanna Ave location and reconstruction began in earnest in the postwar years. The Club enjoyed a small ownership percentage in what became one of Canada's first industrial condominium buildings which led to a stable environment for the next 67 years! Over the decades, over 7000' of handlaid track was built along with the removal of the outside third rail to 2 rail operation in the early 60s. Innovation has always been a Club tradition with the early adoption of walk-around throttles in the 70s, CTC with relay and eventually computer-based signalling in the 80s, computer controlled cab/block assignment in the 2000s. Fast clock operations with full timetable passenger and the time-tested paper waybill freight operations have been the norm since the 1960s. The Club in the old war factory warehouse became a Toronto tradition with many tens of thousands of visitors to what is arguably one of Canada's most famous model railroads.

But nothing lasts forever, and in 2012 when Toronto's relentless condo building boom inevitably encroached into what was the former factory district, the dreaded eviction notice was received. With brave faces

and a series of highly publicized final shows, the final trains were run over the Hanna Ave layout. This attracted a fair bit of media attention, with the official “severing of the mainline” shown on CBC’s National News. And like the old expression ... “How long does it take to cut down a tree?”, after the final shows and one last private operating session, the power saws and wire cutters came out and in only a few short weeks, 67 years of effort was gone.

Shortly after the eviction notice was received, the search for new space ensued. Several anxious months of looking rewarded the Club with great fortune in being able to secure a 4500 SF air-conditioned basement space in a relatively new building, and most conveniently just across the street from a Home Depot! In hindsight, the move provided a much-needed renewal of inspiration... membership increased, participation soared, enthusiasm rose and so did Club spirit. Several tens of thousands of hours later, the Club has been able to rebuild the Central Ontario Railway into a unique, fun to operate and visually spectacular layout.

The Design of the new layout

The Club took advantage of the excellent model railroad design tool 3rdPlanIt to create a modern innovative design, using these key criteria:

1. Continue to model the Central Ontario Railway, allowing CN and CP connections for interchange traffic.
2. Minimum mainline radius of 56”, maximum sustained grade 2.0%, and 25 car design train length.
3. Walk around design with NO DUCKUNDERS.
4. Re-use the already built major yards and terminals... saving hundreds of switches, over 2000’ of handlaid track and thousands of hours of work.
5. Long mainline 8-10 scale miles, with two subdivisions and a long branch line
6. Large staging yards with capacity for at least 20 tracks of 30’ length.
7. Updated control systems including adoption of NCE DCC, JMRI PanelPro, WiThrottle, and stand alone Loconet for block detection, switch machines and signals.
8. Activities to keep 12-15 members fully involved during operating sessions.
9. Continue with train operation using CTC, timetable passenger and waybill freight systems.

Concept

Operationally, the Club railway has been the Central Ontario Railway (CORY) since the 1960s. There was a 1:1 version of the Central Ontario Rwy that was built to serve large iron ore deposits found north of Lake Ontario with dreams of building further north into the Ottawa River Valley area. The CORY ran as a small railway with decent passenger and freight traffic volumes, and like many a small line, it was absorbed into the CNR system in the early part of the 20th century. After the iron ore mines played out, and with car load traffic volume dwindling away, it was abandoned just like many other Southern Ontario branchlines in the 1990s.

Happily, the 1:48 version lives on with the CORY functioning as it was imagined: serving as a bridge line running north-south. The connections with CNR and CPR transcontinental mainlines occur on both the north and south end of the Central Ontario system. The Club’s version of the CORY is a thriving busy railroad grown to become the third major railroad in Ontario, only just behind the mighty CNR and CPR.

The southern main terminus is Lilleyburg (named after co-founder Borden Lilley) and it features full passenger, freight and engine facilities. The mainline traverses north through eight towns of various sizes, ending up at the railroad’s largest facilities of Ebertville/East Davidson. The northern city of Ebertville (named

after co-founder Harry Ebert) has the largest passenger station with a full coach yard plus the adjoining East Davidson freight yard has a 250+ car capacity, along with a 18 stall roundhouse. This roundhouse is modeled after the still existing downtown Toronto CPR John St roundhouse housing the Toronto Railway Museum.

The north-south mainline travels through typical Central Ontario landscape which can be quite rugged due to the rocky nature of the Canadian Shield. Large bridges are needed to span the numerous rivers and deep glaciated valleys. Numerous towns dot the route with the frequent passing sidings to facilitate the heavy traffic volume. Industry is typical of the late steam era with small and large customers requiring frequent service. The heavy post war traffic volume also necessitated the installation of Centralized Traffic Control.

Passenger operations

Supported by a published timetable and an 8:1 fast clock, the vibrant cities of Lilleyburg and Ebertville are fully serviced by the CORY with four daily passenger trains in each direction. Overnight trains are provided with sleeper service. The two daytime trains in each direction have both parlour car and dining car services for the well-heeled patron. The CORY uses both standard steel heavyweight equipment and has recently purchased stainless steel equipment for the two early evening trains. The trains also call on eight towns located between Ebertville and Lilleyburg. The CORY has a busy express business too with one coach only train in each direction that provide express and passenger service along the line. The CORY also operates a mixed train that provides freight service to the smaller towns of Maynooth and Martin Lake. To support this busy passenger schedule, the CORY has 70 passenger cars in its fleet. Additionally, as the CORY connects with the two major Canadian railway systems, passenger trains from the connecting railways provide express and passenger service to and from cities located off layout. There are two daily passenger trains from CNR and CPR respectively operating via trackage rights. The most spectacular train on the layout is undoubtedly CPR's The Canadian. Club members were fortunate to have obtained a number of Sunset's passenger set releases combined with their beautiful FP7a and F7b which allows for a prototypic ABA consist and a 13 car train stretching over 25' in length. A crowd pleaser without question.

Freight Operations

With over 750 freight cars in service on the layout, and with over 75 rail served industries, freight operation is lively and complex. With all freights running as extras in true Canadian railroad tradition, both Dispatcher and Engineers must keep their timetable at hand to make sure the passenger fleet is not delayed. As was typical for the era, freights are run as extras and with three classes; namely through, drag and local. CORY through freights run between the two major freight yards, Lilleyburg and East Davidson. The two daily drag freights set out and pick up cuts of cars at strategic locations along the line. The numerous local freights work the major terminals and the local towns along the mainline to keep the railroad served customers happy providing frequent reliable service. Parkers Falls is the largest on line railway town and has an assigned full-time switcher due to the large quantity of industries and resultant volume of traffic. In development is Port Coleman which will also feature a full time switch crew. Industry siding car capacity is about 330 cars; yard capacity across the is 415 cars, and staging adds another 550. Typical freight train length is about 25 cars due to sustained 2% grades, with longer trains requiring helper service to reach the summit elevation of 78". O scale helper service can be an exciting experience! Offline traffic is generated through the connections with the CPR and CNR via our staging yard concepts. The numerous CNR and CPR freights utilize various trackage rights to bring traffic to and from the Central Ontario to the rest of the continental rail network. It's great to see some of the classic late steam era CNR and CPR steam locos that were produced in O scale a few years back.

Signal system

The Central Ontario Railway operates on the mainline by signal authority and is fully signaled from end to end. There are 13 fully interlocked junctions, and 5 intermediate automatic block signals with signal indications following the 1962 Canadian Railway Operation Rules. Using JMRI software the Club has created a virtual US&S dispatch panel that mimics the look and feel of a 1950's era machine. It is complex but highly accurate, now requiring over 70K lines of code! As everything regarding the control system runs through the main

computer system, remote log in is now set up allowing one Club member to Dispatch from his home just outside of Vancouver, BC... over 4000 km away. Visiting railway employees and management have commented that the Central Ontario Railway is sounds and feels like a real railway... a real testament to the efforts of the Club members

Local Panels

All local control panels are created using JMRI software and are accessible via tablets or mobile phones. Fully embracing the network capabilities of JMRI webserver and WiThrottle, no longer is there a need for large (and increasingly expensive) physical control panels at the large terminals. This provides great freedom as members are no longer tied to a central control panel when operating large terminals which can be 60'+ in length. Additionally, any changes can be made quickly without having to rebuild or rewire panels. There are nine virtual individual JMRI control panels required to operate the Club's 300+ powered turnouts. One will only find two physical control panels on the entire layout, one each for the turntables at East Davidson and Lilleyburg.

Train Control

The Club uses the NCE system for train control combined with WiThrottle within the JMRI platform. WiThrottle permits the use of tablets and/or mobile phones for train control. It's a great package allowing both throttle and layout schematic / switch controls on one screen.

Trackwork

This layout has close to 4500 feet of track currently in service. All new switches and custom trackwork on the current layout have been handlaid, and there now features 350+ switches in service. To save time, the club invested in several 1000 feet of MicroEngineering flextrack, using code 148 for the main, code 125 for secondary and yards, and code 100 on industrial. The Club's flextrack uniquely features steel rail instead of nickel-silver. To facilitate, the Club purchased a large quantity of steel rail from Right-O-Way and then shipped that directly to MicroEngineering. They then did a special production run that features their beautifully detailed tie strip with steel rail inserted. The two large terminals that were saved from the Club's previous layout feature fully handlaid track.

Buildings

The vast majority of hundreds of structures on the Central Ontario are scratchbuilt. Ranging in size from an outhouse to the vast paper mill complex at Parkers Falls. As there remains a few structures on the layout that date back to the 1940s, the level of detail can range from basic to ultra detailed. Buildings have been built from cardstock, hardboard, foamcore, and plastics with the vast majority of structures scratchbuilt or highly kitbashed. More recent buildings feature fully detailed and lit interiors complete with 3D printed components and furniture. Names of the buildings and signs reflect the Club members' sense of humour. As a result, a high tolerance to "Dad" jokes is a Club membership requirement.

Bridges

With the track elevation ranging from 24" to 78", and with the summit level crossing the aisle several times, bridges play a large part of the Club's current layout plan and its heritage. The large metal through truss at the Club entrance and the 15' long suspension bridge were built in the early 1940's for the Club's layout at Union Station. Construction methods were typical of this formative hobby era however these two bridges were built very well and have supported the passage of many tens of thousands of O scale trains over the past 80+ years. The two 8' long aisleway spanning curved top chord thru trusses were CNC cut from plywood by a member who designed them originally for a G scale layout. A large double track five foot high wooden trestle greets visitors at the club entrance, carefully constructed from a 2x4 piece of pine lumber cut down to scale dimensional sizes on a table saw. Can you say sawdust? More recently Club members have embraced 3D

printing having created a fully detailed 7' long, 3' high curved steel trestle complete with enough cross bracing and rivet detail to satisfy the "no compromises" mindset.

Scenery

Scenery on a 3500 SF model railroad, and one that features multiple decks is a daunting task but over the past decade of construction, slowly the scenery crew have been perfecting their craft. Methods range from traditional wire mesh/plaster to styrofoam to electrostatic applicators. Thousands of details make the layout come to life with fully sceniced and detailed scenes abundant. Work continues in this area and the layout is now more than 80% fully sceniced. Trees and details continue to be added as the mood and creativity permits.

Club Membership

The Club has maintained a membership in the 20-25 range for as long as anyone can remember. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, the recent move to a new facility attracted a few new members. The prospect of building a 3500SF model railroad was a real thrill. Like most Clubs, members have a varied professional backgrounds and even highly different interests about model building, but the passion to build and maintain a large layout is firmly entrenched in all. Club members are quite happy to have had several very talented ladies join over the years, and this tradition continues. Regular meeting times are Thursdays and Saturdays as work sessions, and also Tuesday evening as a free format running session. For many however, the real prize is the monthly formal Operating Session. The Club is very serious about having fun!! Now happening on Saturdays beginning mid morning, breaking for a fully catered lunch and resuming in the afternoon. The Club is always open for membership enquiries and visitors are most welcome on Tues/Thurs 7-9 and Sat 1-3.

Public Shows

The Club has Public Shows every year with three dates in February and two in early December. Attendance remains good and for many Torontonians coming to see the Central Ontario Railway in action is a fun family tradition.

Social Media

- Website: www.modelrailroadclub.com
- Email: info@modelrailroadclub.com
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/modelrrclubto
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/modelrrclubto/
- YouTube:
www.youtube.com/@modelrailroadcluboftoronto1643

Now let's sit back and take a look around this beautiful layout.

The track plans are at the very end of this article.



They knew Amy was coming to visit!



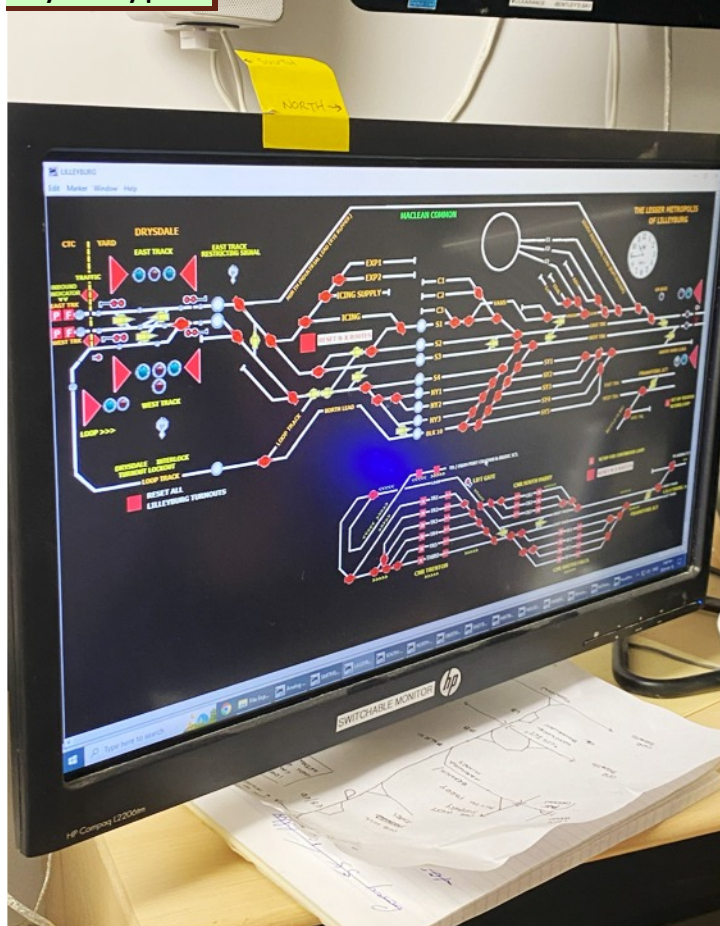
Club member Dave MacLean using a tablet to control a loco and through switches. The Club is 100% digital and uses JMRI and WiThrottle.

Amy Dawdy photo



Time tested paper waybills used to route the 750+ freight cars in service on the Central Ontario Rwy.

Amy Dawdy photo



The panel is used to control Lilleyburg and one of the two large staging yards. The Club utilizes JMRI webserver functionality which allows for any panel to be displayed on the local operator's tablet when running any yard.

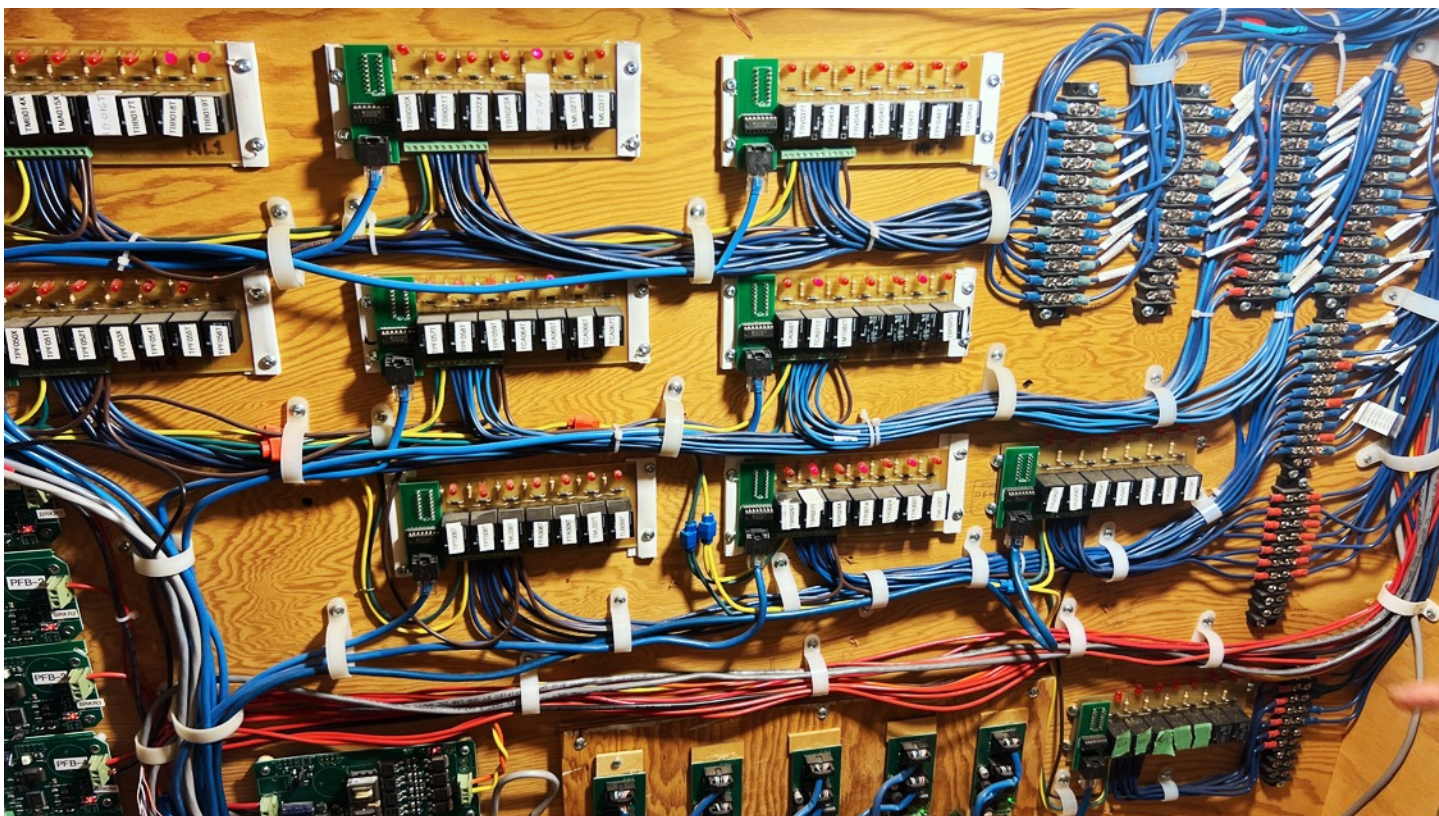


CTC Dispatcher panels for the Central Ontario's 8 scale mile long mainline. Created using JMRI software allowing prototypic traffic control by signal indication according to Canadian Railway Operating Rules c.1962



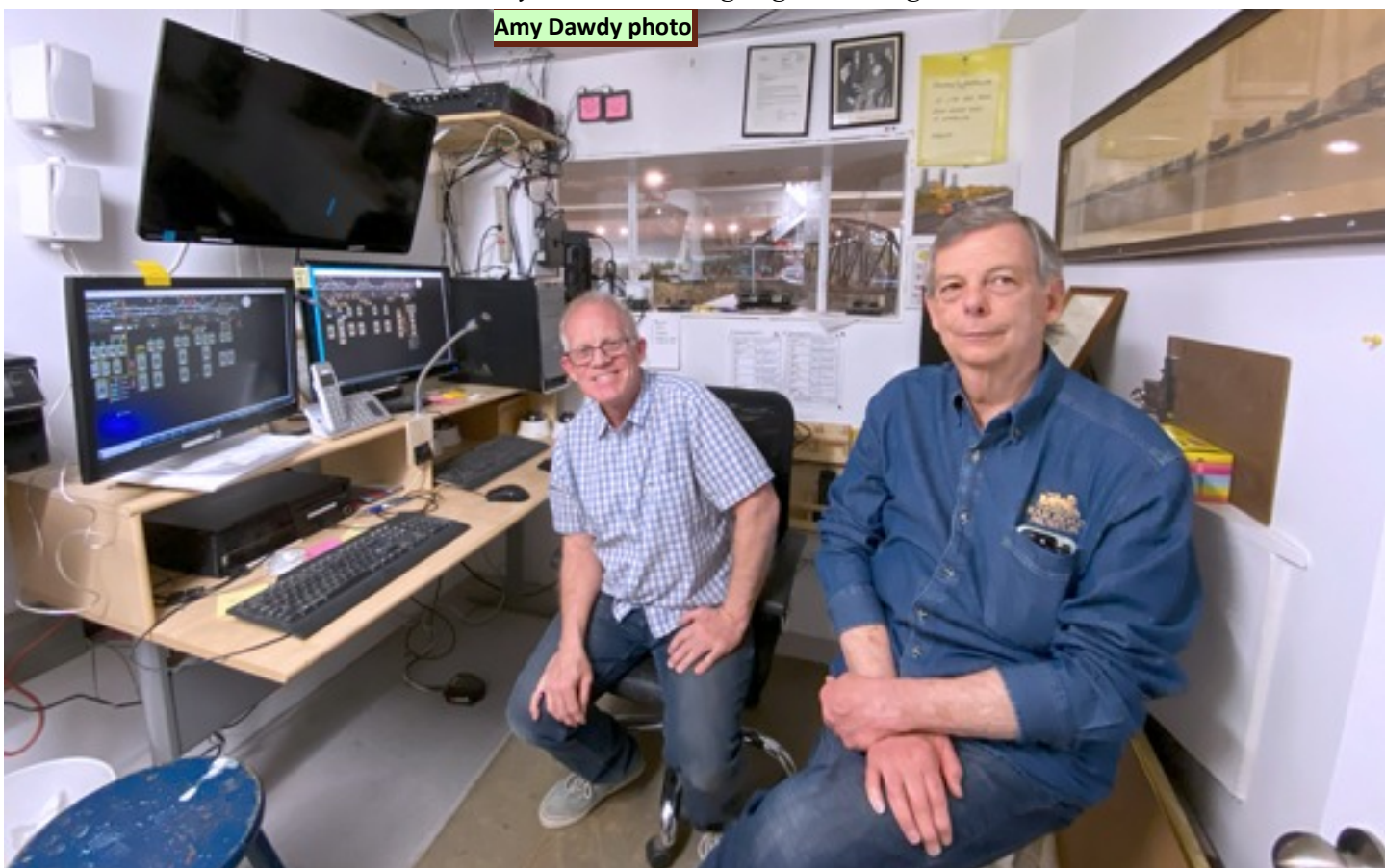
"Did you seen where it went??" Club members look for their train in one of the staging yards.

The O Scale Resource July/August 2025



Part of the electronics that controls all mainline turnouts, using RR-Cirkits Towerman Cards and modified Bruce Chubb relay boards. Also seen are some of the many DCC Specialties circuit breakers. Colour coded neatly installed wiring is good wiring!

Amy Dawdy photo



Club member Dave MacLean and Dan Dawdry check out the Dispatch Office. The bay window behind overlooks the layout.



Soon the aviation accident investigators will arrive.



CPR TOFC flat car.. Modified Lionel cars.



Flat car load with large marine engine. No doubt destined to Port Coleman for a "Laker".



Some of the 70+ online industries served by the Central Ontario Rwy.



Maintaining a Class 1 railroad is a full time business. Seen here the Central Ontario work train occupies a siding north of Martin Lake.



The 15' long functional suspension bridge has been a Club landmark since it was built in the early 1940s. (Not very prototypical, but it has been kept in service for over 80 years!) Future Port Coleman below.

Model Railroad Resource 3D Division - Resin Parts



Announcing our BUDA No. 30 Clamp Type Steel Bumping Post. These can still be found all over, on customer sidings, yards and more. Kit includes the clamping parts to attach to the rail. Only \$9.00

Amy Dawdy photo



CORY #75 powers past East Davidson will The Canadian is seen on the high trestle behind.

Amy Dawdy photo



Satire is a strong Club tradition... as seen on the billboard on top of Barwick's Biscuits and Buns located in Lilleyburg.



A snapshot of daily life seen here at the town of Martin Lake.



Frank's Farm Feeds is named after famed O scaler Frank Dubery who left the Club because of a move, later becoming a founding member of Aberfoyle Junction.



High level view of O&S Paper Products at Parkers Falls. Tight congested trackwork makes gives the Parker's Falls operator a challenging switching puzzle.

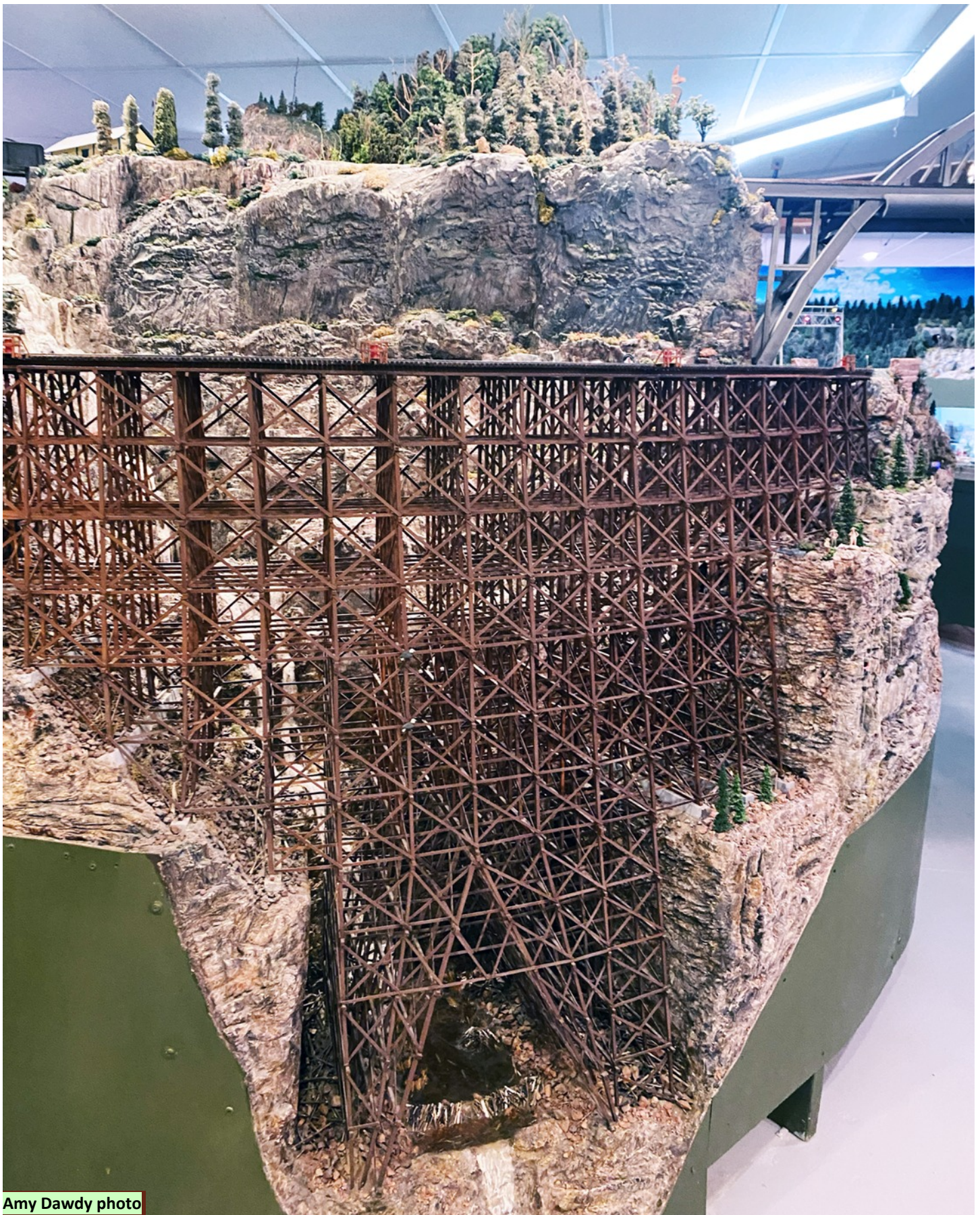


Mark One Brewery complex at Petrie. The model was built in the 1950s by Club co-founder Borden Lilley.

Kids having fun (as you were allowed to do back in the day) playing in the waterfall.

Amy Dawdy photo





Amy Dawdy photo

The Rick Mlynarczyk Memorial Bridge. Rick (and others) made this double track wooden bridge that has a 2% grade with super elevated double track. Much of the dimensional lumber having been cut from a single 2X4 on a table saw!



Amy Dawdy photo

Old Holland Cheese at Maynooth



Amy Dawdy photo

We just named this area, John Allen Memorial area, after the builder of the famed Gorre & Daphetid... somehow seeking to justify the many levels and tunnels! Photo by Amy Dawdy





Ontario is blessed with many thousands of lakes. John Martin's Marina services the many pleasure boats on Martin Lake.



The Model Railroad Club of Lilleyburg occupies the top floor of an industrial building in Lilleyburg. A whimsical 3D printed model railroad featuring many of the scenes on the CORY..... an O scale model railroad in an O scale model railroad (scale is 1:2304) !!!



Amy Dawdy photo



Amy Dawdy photo

Bentley's Bay on the lower deck with a train climbing the grade through Sloan on the upper deck.



O&S Paper Products at Parker's Falls is a the largest single customer on the Central Ontario Rwy. Parker's Falls has a dedicated local switcher due to the many industries.



House under construction in Parker's Falls.



Ontario Hydro is receiving another transformer to satisfy the demands of a growing electrical grid. The Schnabel car is a MTH model converted to 2. It's a heavy load to carry... The transformer has 5 lbs of lead inside!



Martin Lake Station. The house track has many express cars for the local shippers.



The ever-busy Diesel Shop at the East Davidson Engine Terminal.



East Davidson roundhouse and thriving industry Borden's Privies.



East Davidson engine terminal. The CPR has trackage rights into East Davidson has an agreement with the Central to provide light servicing on their diesel. The Ash Pit in lower left.



East Davidson roundhouse, home terminal for some of the 80+ locos in service on the Central Ontario.

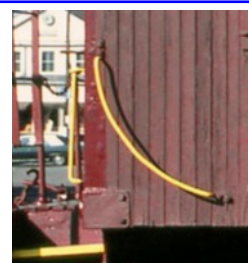


East Davidson engine terminal with gondola being loaded with ash. The CPR has trackage rights over sections of the Central Ontario and contracts with the CORY to provide light service to the CPR locos.



Grab Iron Ends (Nut/Bolt) and for modern cars, Grab Iron Ends (Rivet). These small parts will really dress up an older Athearn/Reynolds/AllNation car as well as some new cast cars and, of course, your own custom built equipment. The stem is .020 and designed for .015 wire. There are 17 parts per sprue and four sprues package.

Model Railroad Resource 3D Division - Resin Parts





The coaling tower looms large at the East Davidson engine terminal. Another classic structure from the 1950s built by Club co-founder Borden Lilley.



Amy Dawdy is enjoying the passage of "The Canadian" seen descending into the CPR staging area. The Canadian was produced by Sunset/Third Rail.



What scene would be complete without a large wooden trestle? Most of the dimensional lumber on this trestle was cut from a 2X4 using a table saw! Madness!

The members there that night even fed us!

Going counterclockwise from Amy Dawdy, Larry Barwick, Rick Sargent, George Nikos, Sandy Drysdale, Mark Zwolinski, Michael Colantonio, Katrina Hodes, Dave MacLean



Amy Dawdy photo

A geologic formation in the hard granite of the Canadian Shield. Some claim it sort of looks like a human face... (always fun to point out to visitors)

The quiet of the Ontario countryside is greeted with a southbound Central Ontario Rwy freight that has just passed thorough Macadam Jct.



Amy Dawdy photo

Topley Tower presiding over the interlocking at the south end of Ebertville Station.



Amy Dawdy photo

What Canadian layout would be complete without one winter scene?



Amy Dawdy photo

Central Ontario Express recently received a new building complete with interior details. The local employees were thrilled.



Amy Dawdy photo

Lilleyburg Car Shops.

Stuart's Sand and Gravel is a another major shipper on the Central Ontario Rwy.



Amy Dawdy photo



Looking down the centre aisle down the length of the layout room. East Davidson freight yard on the right, Mount Batton on the left. 100' away in the far distance is Parker's Falls...yes it's a big layout!

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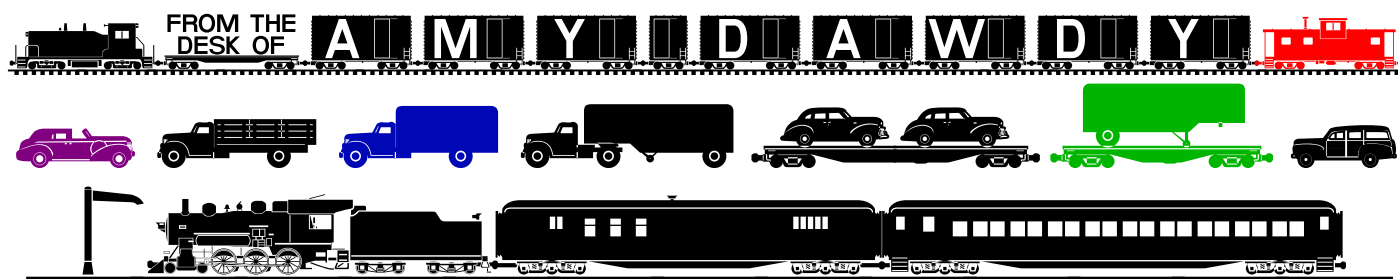
ATLANTIC COAST LINE, RICHMOND FREDERICKSBURG AND POTOMAC, AND THE NEW HAVEN / Chicago Burlington and Quincy / ILLINOIS CENTRAL UNION PACIFIC / **PENN CENTRAL** / ZEPHYR: CHICAGO BURLINGTON & QUINCY. ALSO USED BY WESTERN PACIFIC. DENVER & RIO GRANDE WESTERN. ROCK ISLAND. AND FLORIDA EAST COAST/NEW YORK CENTRAL



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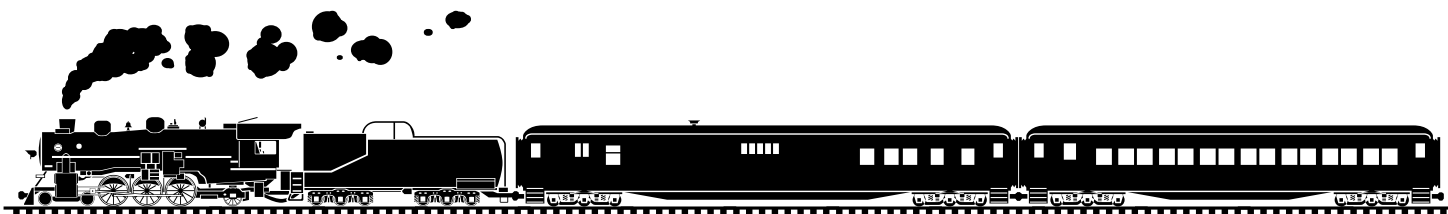


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Amy Dawdy photo

CPR FP7A, F7B, FP7A lead The Canadian. Locos by Sunset Third Rail with LokSound decoders.





Amy Dawdy photo

The Canadian has overtaken a slow CORY freight while passing the signal bridge at Maynooth. (LEDs are always lit but are dark here due to photographic shutter speeds)



Amy Dawdy photo

The Canadian leans in the super-elevated curve at Maynooth.

Left: Central Ontario maintenance department.

Below: CORY #75 eases on to the high steel trestle.

This bridge was built entirely from 3D printed components. It is 7' long, 30" high and features a 74" super-elevated curve.



Amy Dawdy photo



Amy Dawdy photo

Showing the highest track at 80" and the lowest at 24".



Amy Dawdy photo

CORY #75 (USH 2-8-4) eases a freight over the high steel trestle. This bridge was built entirely from 3D printed components. It is 7' long, 30" high and features a 74" super-elevated curve.



Amy Dawdy photo



Photo mural on wall featuring Rock Island #325. We are not sure of its heritage, but there was a persistent rumor that it came from Chicago Union Station how it ended up in Toronto is lost to history.

See picture on next page to see how this fits in with the layout.



Here is a new shot of The Canadian on the bridge with the Rock Island mural. This scene sure makes a 25' long train look small! Photo by Sandy Drysdale

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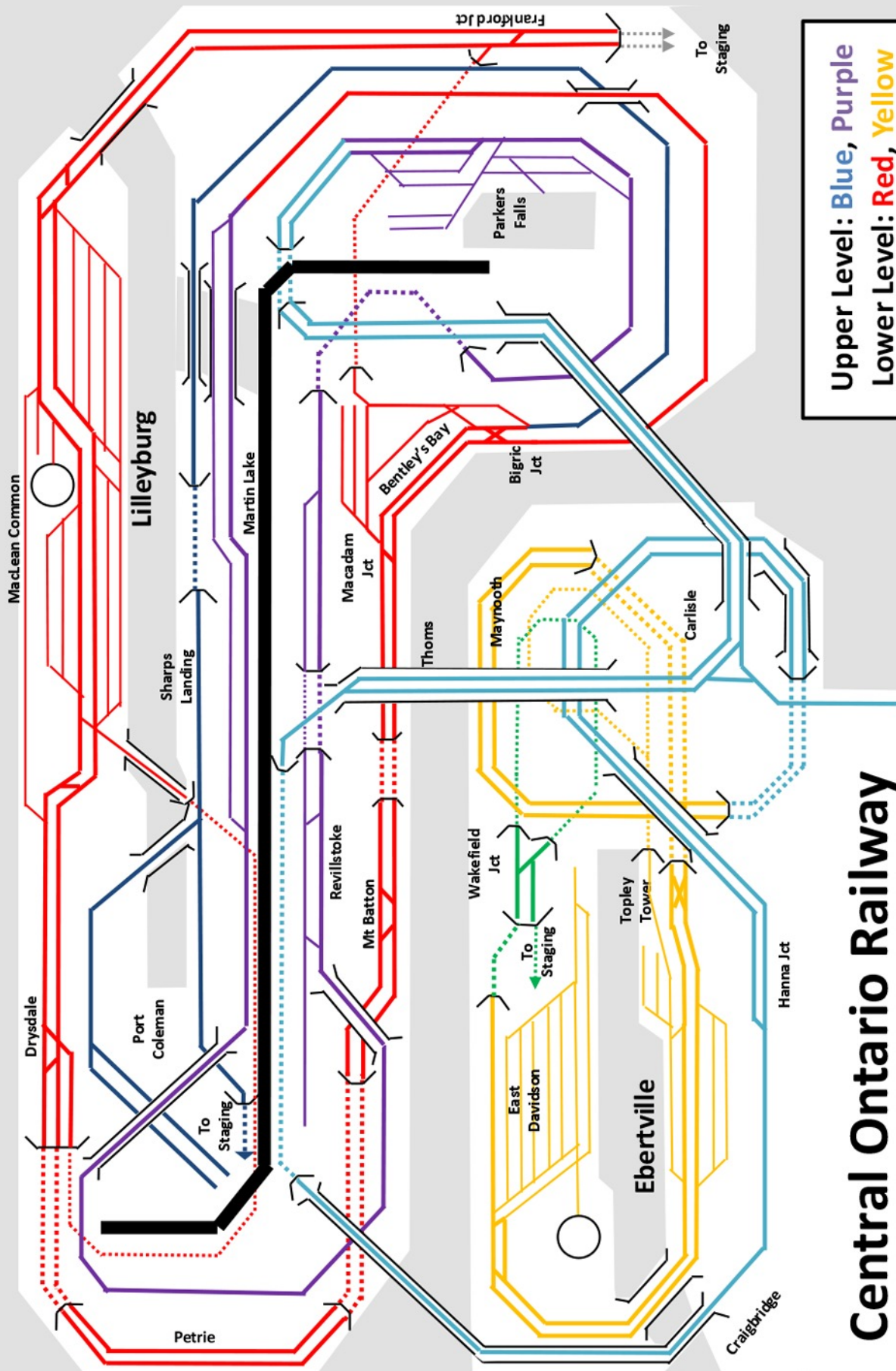
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Amy Dawdy photo

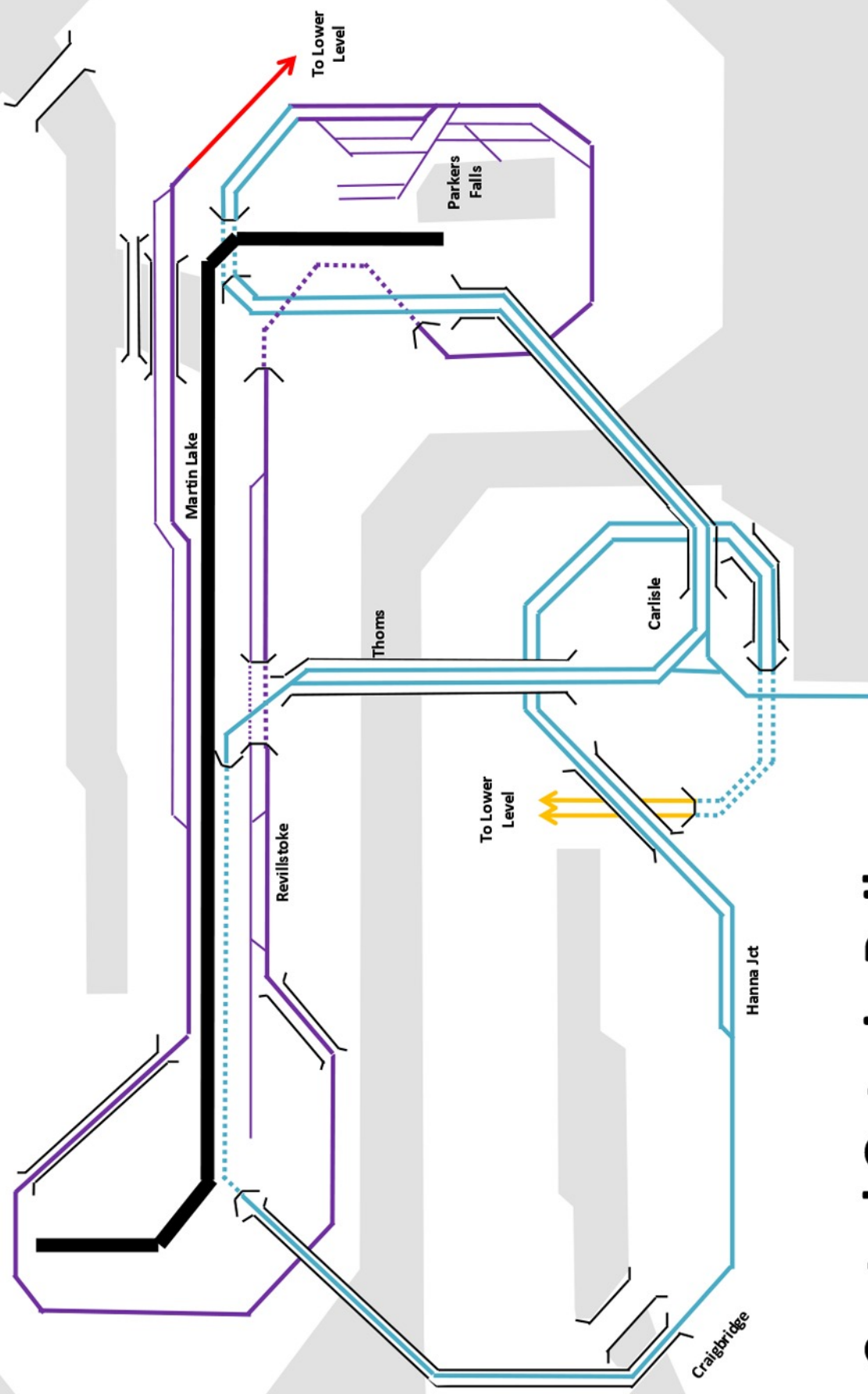
The Canadian's dome-observation car (known as a Park Car as they are all named after National Parks) leaves the Central Ontario Rwy and threads its way through Bentley's Bay to reach its home rails.



Upper Level: Blue, Purple
Lower Level: Red, Yellow

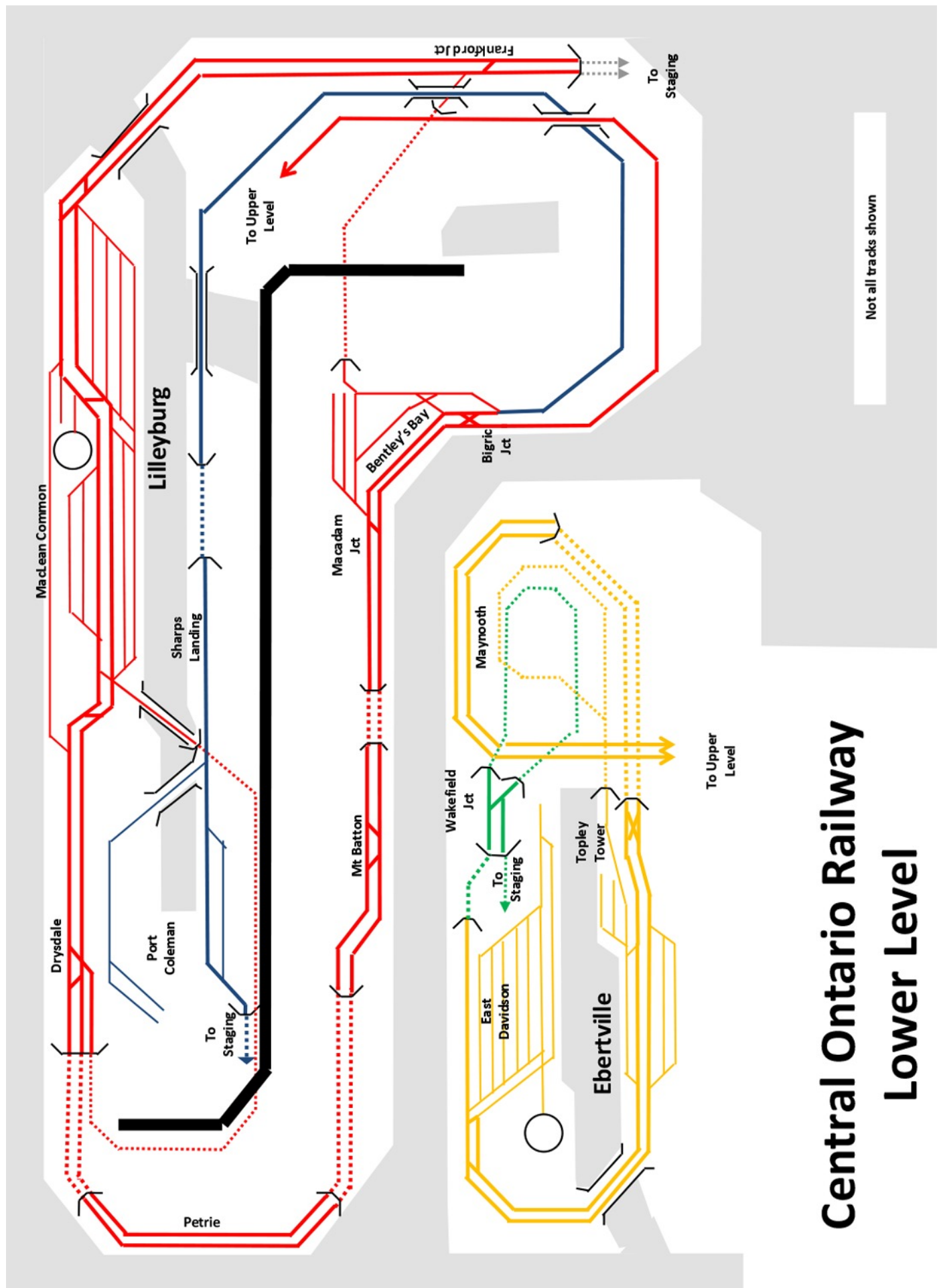
Not all tracks shown

Central Ontario Railway Lower and Upper Levels

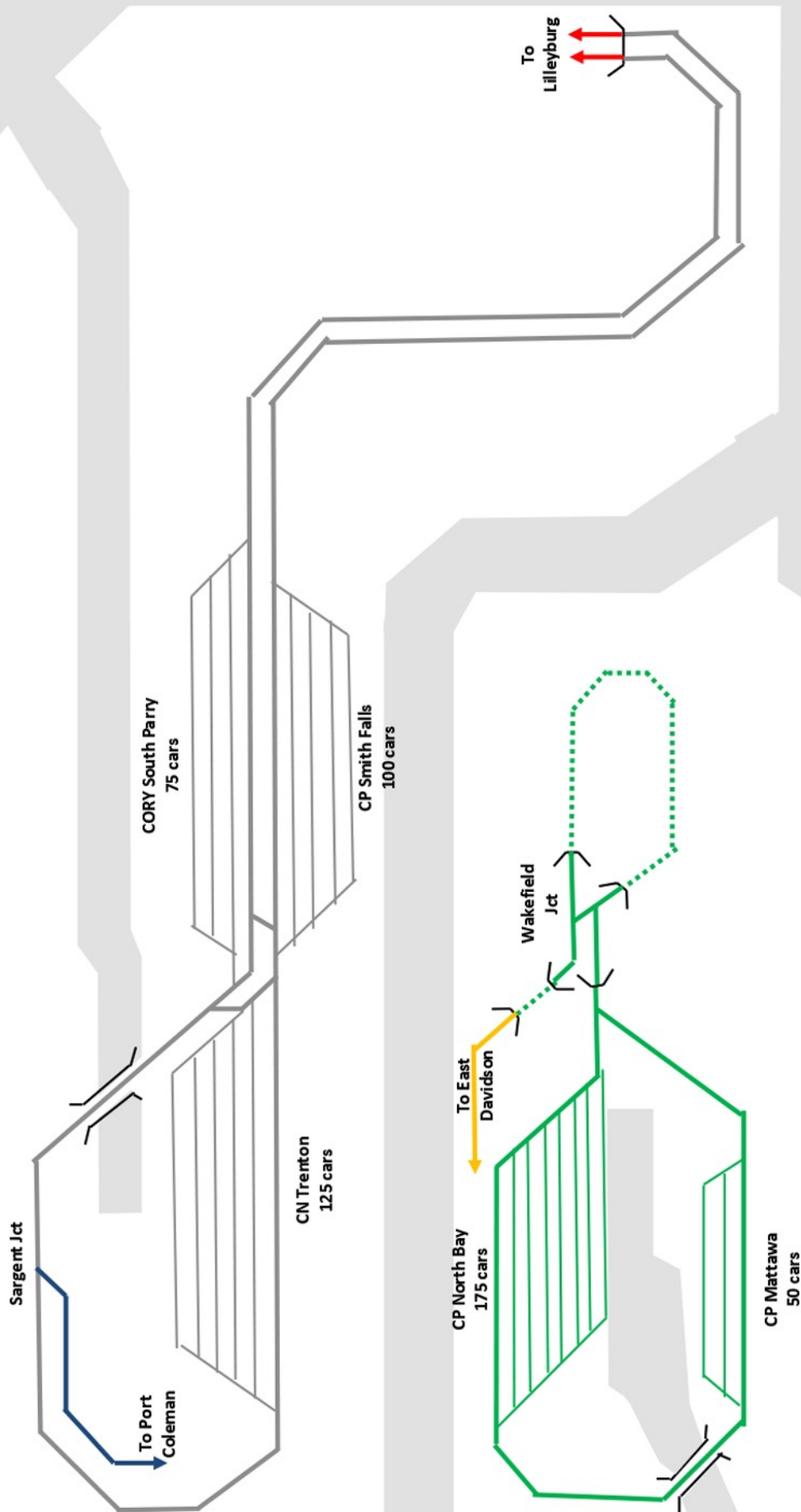


Central Ontario Railway Upper Level

Not all tracks shown

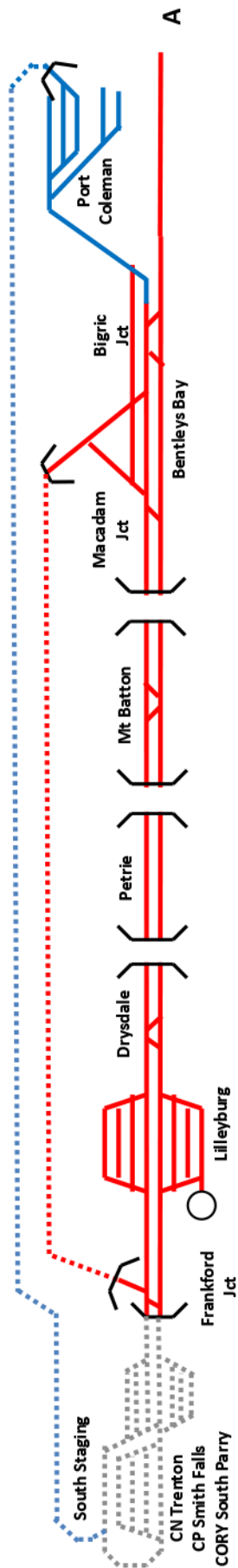


Central Ontario Railway Lower Level

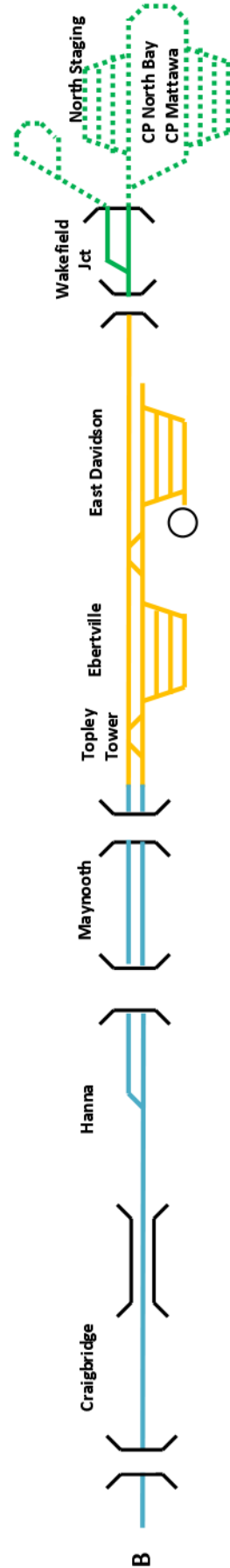
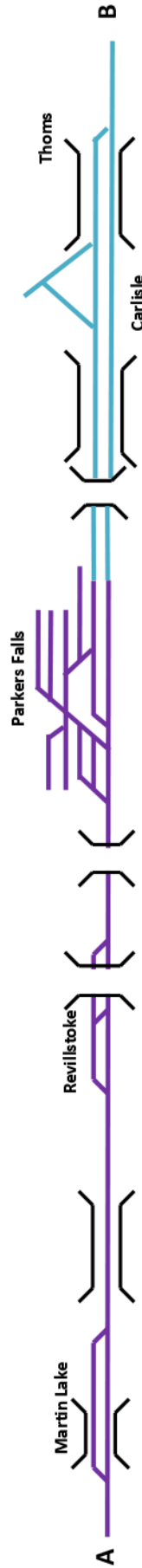


Central Ontario Railway Staging Level

Central Ontario Railway Schematic



Upper Deck: Blue, Purple
Lower Deck: Red, Yellow
Staging: Green, Grey



TELL HOUSE

By William W. Davis

Editors note: Bill will continue with his Southern boxcar build in the next issue.



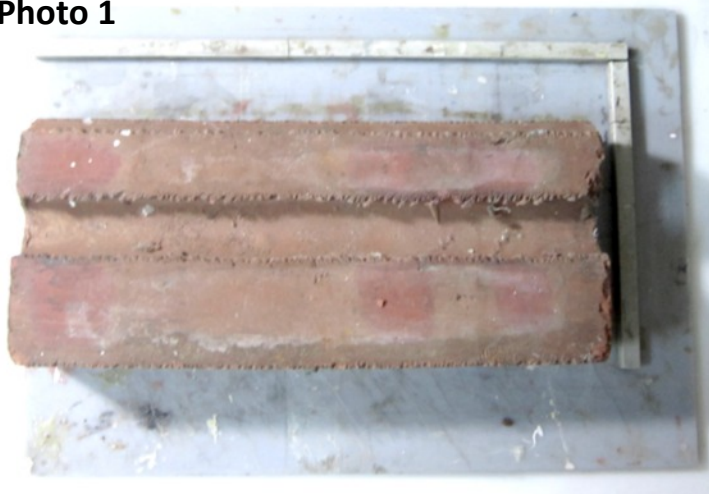
I have built many kits from Berkshire Valley Models. All have been great kits. So when I saw this little house, I figured it would fit well in my town scene. The prototype was located in Telluride, Colorado. The kit has laser cut walls, doors, windows, chimney and roof pieces. I built this kit basically as designed except I added some details that made it unique from the rest of the kits assembled by others. We will discuss those details. For now, here is a picture of the pilot model.

I started by graining and graying the walls, etc. I used a file card to grain the wood pieces. I then used my home brew mixture to create the weathered wood color. This weathering mixture started as a water based Timberline Scenery Timber Stain, but as I used it over the years I added paint, dirty water from cleaning my brushes and stains to the bottles. Today the stain color is nowhere near their original colors. I keep a basic gray mixture and a basic brown mixture. Since all wood does not age the same, my stain gives a variety of wood tones in my model finishes from model to model. I stained all the wall pieces but being wood

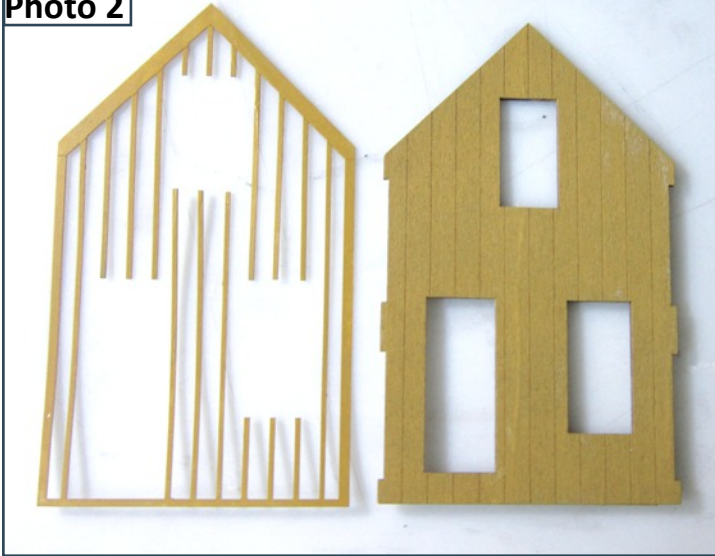
they will warp, so to control warpage, I sandwiched them between my artist pallet and a pieces of 1/4" plastic with a brick on top. Let it sit overnight or longer. Why a brick? For years I have been researching an abandoned brick making complex near my home. So that is where the brick came from. **(Photo 1)**

The walls are laser cut wood but the battens are laser cut card. Once all was stained, I then painted the main building wall using as craft paint Gold Ochre by Craft Smart. When I painted the wall I did it more as heavy wash so the gray of the weathered wood showed through. I kept this very subtle. I didn't want it to look old and dilapidated. I also painted the laser cut batten with the same color. Because of the difference in material, they didn't quite color the same; however, this made the batten stand out a bit which is OK. **(Photo 2)**

Photo 1

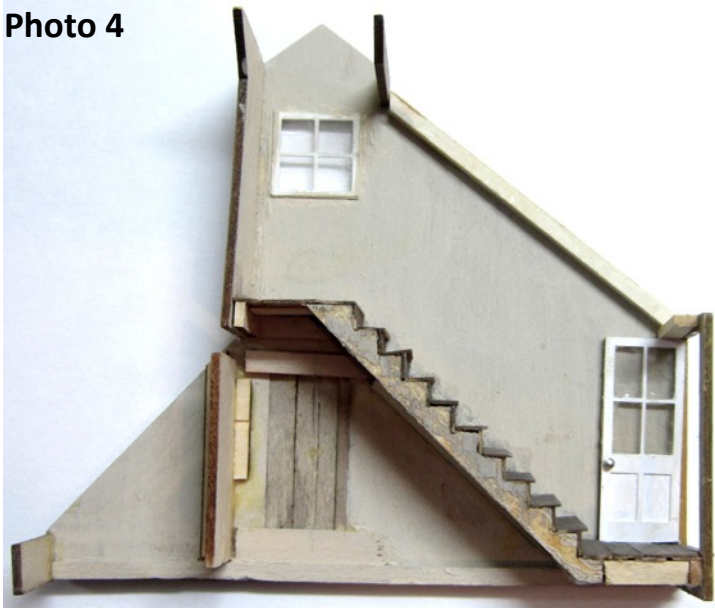
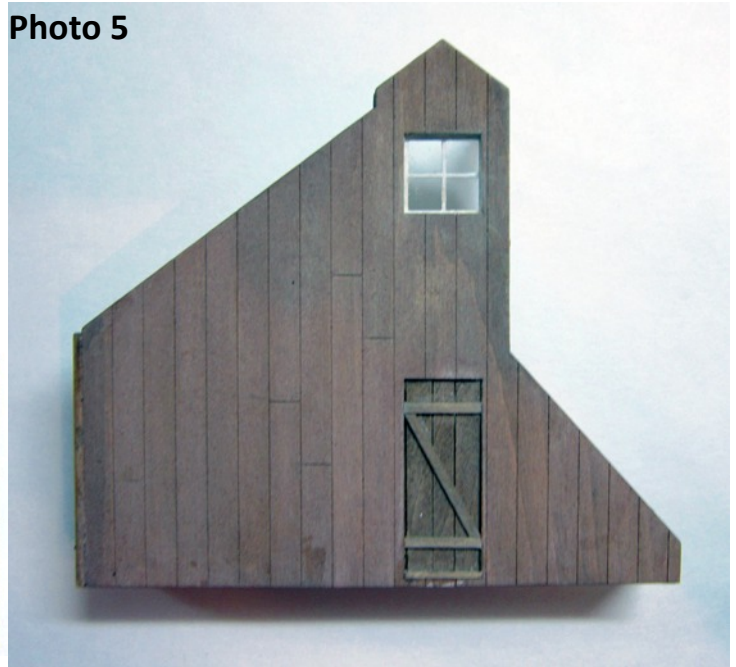


I wanted to have a look of some minor repair work having been done, so I cut out a few batten and replaced them with wood strip not painted to give the effect that some had been replaced since the building was last painted. However, when I painted the windows and doors white I wanted them to look as if they had recently received coat of paint. I added window glazing and green window shades made from card stock.

Photo 2

Where the stair addition was I colored the interior walls a light tan using Linen a Apple Barrel craft paint color. **(Photo 3)**

This is where I started to deviate from the kit, It didn't have stair detail in the stairway addition, but I decided to model the stairs and have the door open. I had some laser cut stair courses in my parts bin that I cut to length. I added stair treads and stair facings along with a landing at the topped a floor at the bottom. I painted the wall the same light tan, but left the stairs in my brown stain color. I mounted the door in the open position.

Photo 3**Photo 4****Photo 5**

I left the door to the under the stair storage area the brown weathered wood stain color so it stood out from the rest of the wall. **(Photo 4)** The exterior of the stairway addition was painted using Apple Barrel Territorial Beige craft paint. **(Photo 5)**

At this point, I had all the sub assemblies completed, structure walls, etc. **(Photo 6)**

Now that the walls were all done, it was time to assemble the wall and add the roof pieces. I added some interior bracing in the corners and top and bottom of the walls. The sub roof, like the walls, is laser cut wood. Once the walls were assembled, I added the sub roofs. Now it was time to decide the type of roofing material to

Photo 6



use. I had considered doing the roofing in corrugated or raised seam, but decided there were too many joints and angles in the roof to deal with that kind of roofing. So I took the easy way out and did tar paper. Back in the day we used to have photo sleeves with black paper. Remember those? Well, I no longer use them for photos, but I have a collection of the black paper. The nice thing about this paper is one side is smooth and the other side has a slight texture much like tar paper. So for the tar paper, I used these old black paper sheets textured side up to represent the roofing. Now not on this model but I have also used this black paper to represent tar paper insulation on model structure with open framing that would have interior detailing like a wooden industrial buildings. I cut the sheets in 3' wide strip and glued them down with white glue, Using a black marking pen I added tar sealing seepage at the seams and at the added patches. I then weathered the roofing with brown and gray chalks. The chimney is a laser cut in 4 pieces that I assembled and added to the roof. I then added the walkway out front and the steps into the stairway area and back door. (Photos 7-10)

Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



You might have noticed the light fixtures over the doors. These were not part of the kit, but one of the added details I wanted. Also, there are lights in the stairwell which were hung from brass wire before the roof was added. Now electronics aren't my thing so my friend, Jim Murphy, added the lights and the electronics. Jim is a master at lighting and animation. Me... not so much.

However, I did install the lights in the stairwell before adding the roof, but Jim wired it all. Thanks Jim!
(Photos 11-12)

Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13



Also notice how rickety the stairs are. That is intentional. When I lived in Southern California I went to several old desert ghost towns and saw many old buildings. In some of those buildings, the stairs were even more rickety than these are. I like the look and feel of the those old stairs so I wanted these to look that way too. **(Photo 13)**

At this point, the building is like the way the kit was designed except for the lighting, the interior in the stairwell area and the shades. However, I felt it still needed something to spruce it up. Especially in the front as that seemed a little bland. I decided a porch roof would add to the look of the structure. Using material from my wood bin, I made the porch roof out 2" x 8" wood strips spaced at 2 foot on center. For the header I used a 4" x 8" piece, and for the posts I used 4"x 4"s. Also in my parts bin were some Grant Line #3546 corner post details. I added them to the top of the posts. To complete the roof, I used 1" x 12" laid crosswise on top of the 2" x 8" joists and added tar paper roofing.

So for all practical purposes, the building is complete except I felt it needed some life. You know – evidence that someone living in this house. From twigs gathered from my yard I added and an ax and a pile of cut wood for the fireplace. A chair fit nicely in the right corner of the porch. I wish I had a rocking chair but this plain chair will have do. In my figure collection is a really cool standing old man. I have had this figure in my collection for more years than I want to remember. He has been living in a box with the rest of my figure waiting for a home. I felt he look perfect on the porch.





For the final detail, I decided to have a couple cats in the stairwell area. A white one laying on the stairs and a black one with a white spot guarding the stairs.



Well, that's it. This was an easy kit to build with a lot of possibilities for detailing. I can think of other modifications that could be done. Maybe I will get another one and see what I can do differently. This was a fun a couple days model project and an opportunity to do a little creative modeling by adding my own personal touch to the kit. Until next time – Happy Modeling.

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NEW TRACKS MODELING

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to HELP PROMOTE “MY BUILD”

We’re looking for a few dedicated volunteers to help promote MY BUILD segments on our YouTube channel and other digital platforms. The goal is to reach more modelers and encourage them to showcase their work. If you have a little time to help spread the word, we will greatly appreciate your help! Contact me, Chris Coarse NTM at: railrunner130@hotmail.com — your support and help will make a big difference.



MY BUILD offers modelers a platform to share projects, get advice, celebrate achievements, and help others learn. Monthly Challenges are designed to inspire creativity, but all types of models are always welcome.

This is a friendly, non-judgmental space where modelers of all ages and experience levels can connect and grow. Join our Facebook Group, New Tracks Modeling, to discuss show content and connect with others.

To participate, send photos of your projects with captions to railrunner130@hotmail.com. We’ll compile them into a slideshow for the show. Participants can talk about their work, share techniques, ask questions, or get feedback — it’s a fun and educational experience!

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for MY BUILD. Feel free to reach out.

Note: A viewer survey will help shape the future of MY BUILD. Visit the New Tracks Facebook page to take part. Survey results will be announced during the June 25th show, where the theme is Water.

Modelers who Showed their modeling on the April and May 2025, MY BUILD show segments.

Each of the participants has an email address included and welcomes your contact.



Every viewer of New Tracks Modeling is encouraged to send in one or more photos of their modeling to the show's host, Chris Coarse at, railrunner130@hotmail.com in advance of the next MY BUILD show. Chris will organize these photos into a PowerPoint slides how. During the show, each participant is given the opportunity to discuss their slides.

Greg Cassidy NTM – gcassidy2@verizon.net – HO scale

Long ago I had built a radio tower for the top of my mountain out of styrene. When I saw Evan Designs had a Warning Sequence light kit, I thought it would be great for my tower.

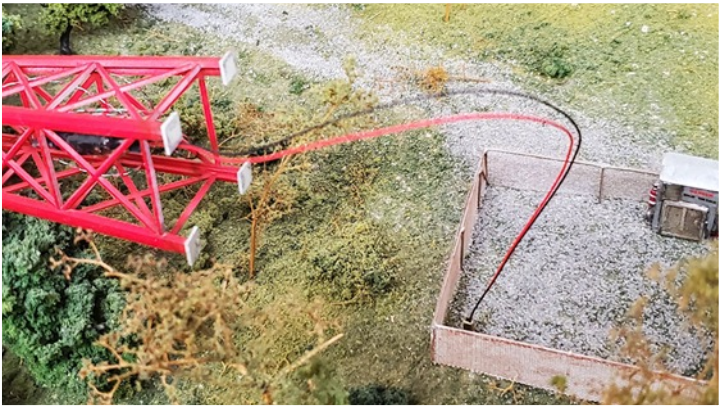
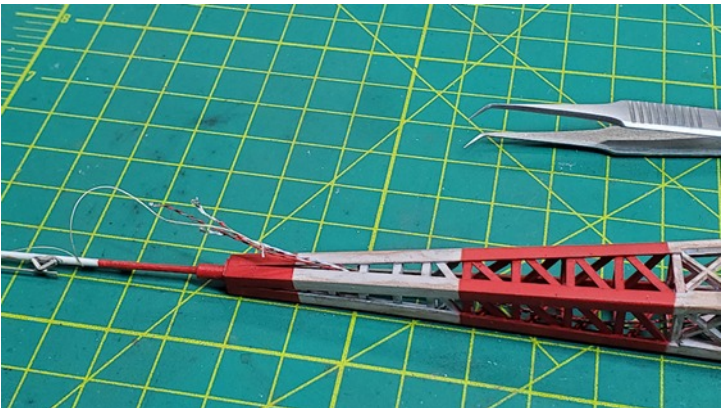
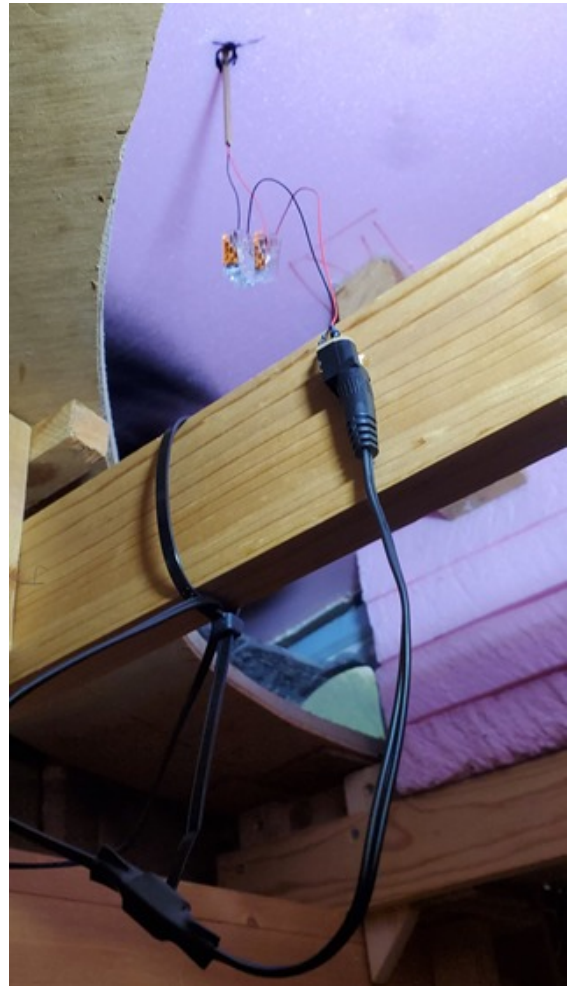
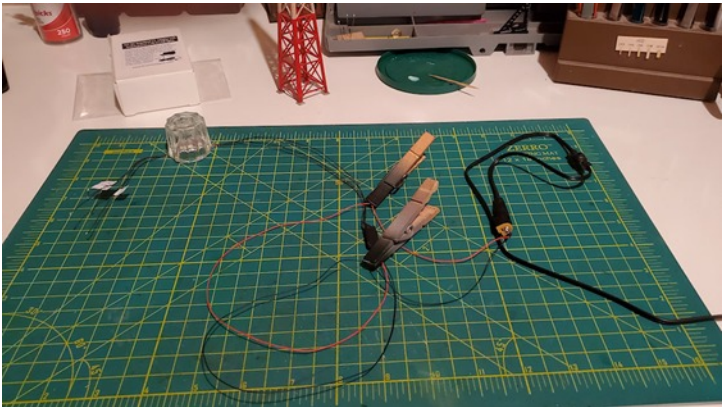


NEW TRACKS MODELING

"My Build" Featuring Models From Our Viewers (04-23-25)

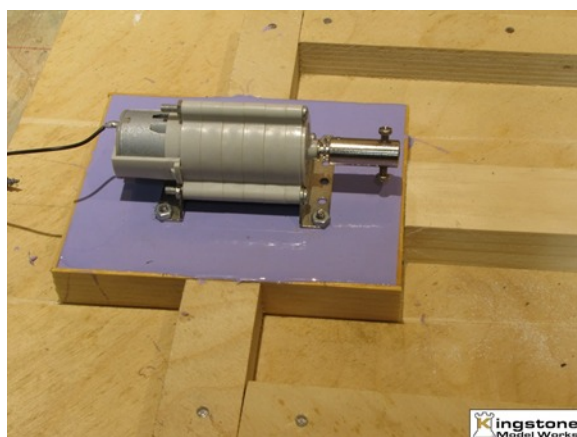
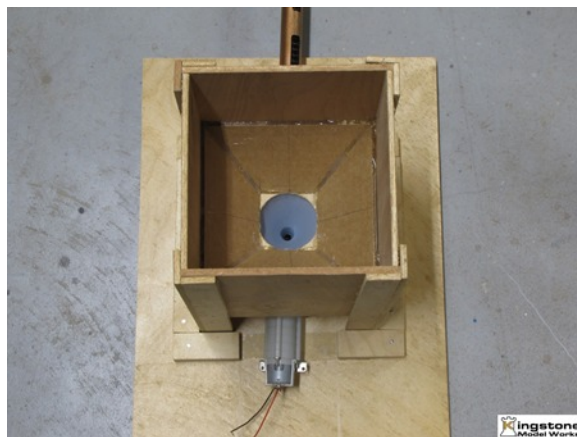
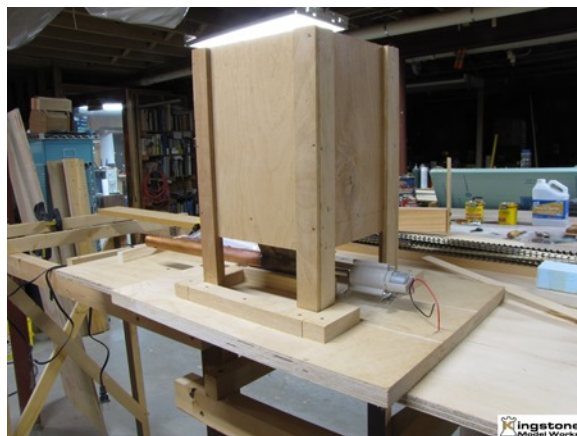
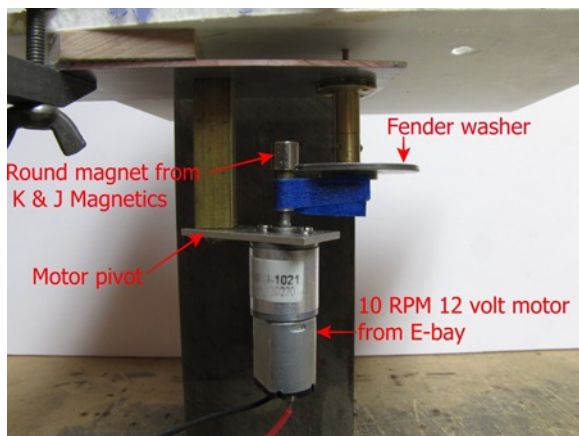
[You can see a video of the entire MY BUILD segment here.](#)

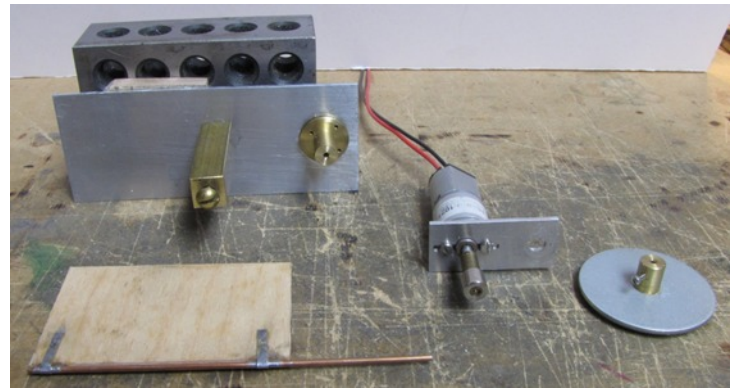
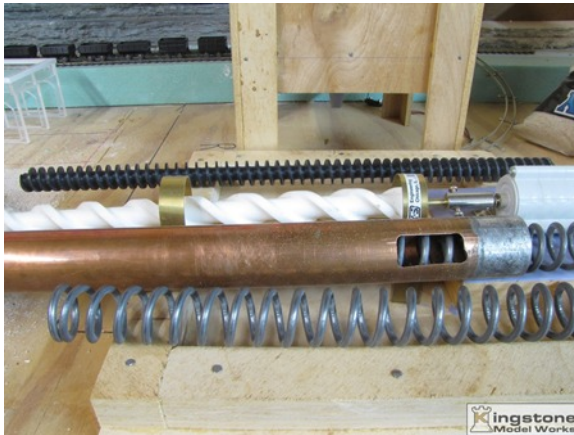
Each of the participants has an email address included, and welcomes your contact.



[We could not print all the images in this build so check out the video here!](#)

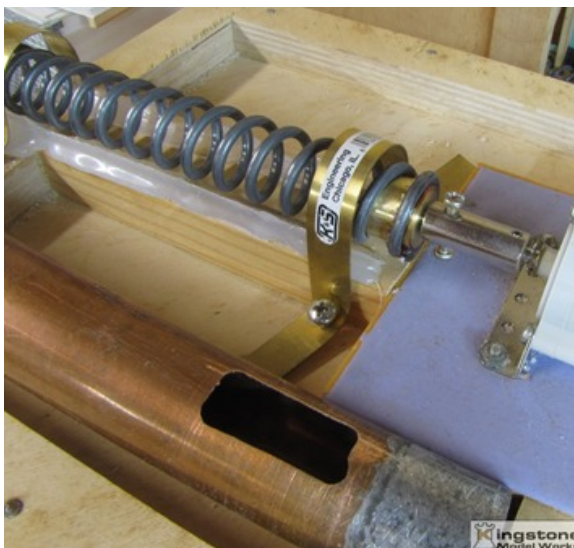
Bernd Fanghanel NTM – protolancer@kingstonemodelworks.com - HO
Animation of the limestone quarry [Click here to see Bernd Fanghanel build on YouTube.](#)





Jeff Jordan NTM - jordan.jordan54@verizon.net – O Scale

Les Davis figures. 3D printed. Each figure is a single piece. Second figure is at a harp switch stand. They don't move, but they look like they are about to!



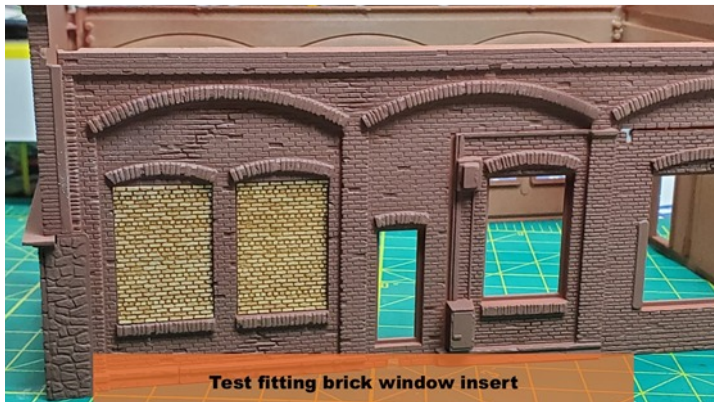
"My Build" Featuring Models From Our Viewers (05-14-25)

[You can see a video of the entire MY BUILD segment here.](#)

Each of the participants has an email address included, and welcomes your contact.

Greg Cassidy NTM – gcassidy2@verizon.net – HO scale

ConCorWeekly Herald Kit. Built to make it look abandoned. 1/32-inch Monster Model Works brick sheet used to fill in windows. Rattle can painted windows. Cut frosted acetate to simulate broken windows. Floor made from 1/64-inch plywood sheet. Used 1/4-inch stripwood and clamps when flooring was stained using Hunterline Driftwood. Used chalk and terra cotta paints to texture stones. Used thinned Burnt Sienna to dirty windows. Awning made from Evergreen styrene.



David Koehler – waxmandave1975@gmail.com - O scale

This is a 1/48th scratch built model of the Milwaukee Road log Station in WoodRuff, WI



Kenneth Myers NTM - kmyersefo@mac.com - HO scale

I designed the Michael Scott Building in Inkscape to 1:87, HO-scale, for my non-prototypical HO model railroad. My design is based on Michael Scott's Ironbridge Works building, as shown on his YouTube Channel, Chandwell.



Click to view!

Jeff Jordan NTM - mjordan.jordan54@verizon.net – O Scale

Here's a work train car. The box car is a modified PacWest kit, long out of production.



NEW TRACKS MODELING

Where Mentors Help Modelers Build



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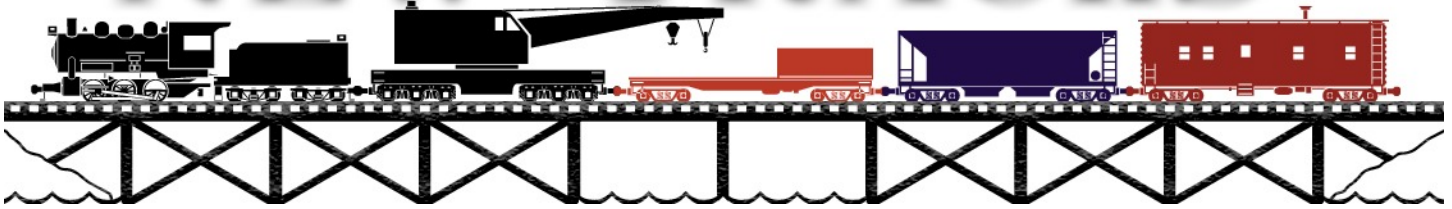
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NEW TRACKS



Mentor Definition: A Trusted Counselor or Guide

By Contributing Editor Jim Kellow MMR

Announcement of “*New Tracks Modeler*” Magazine

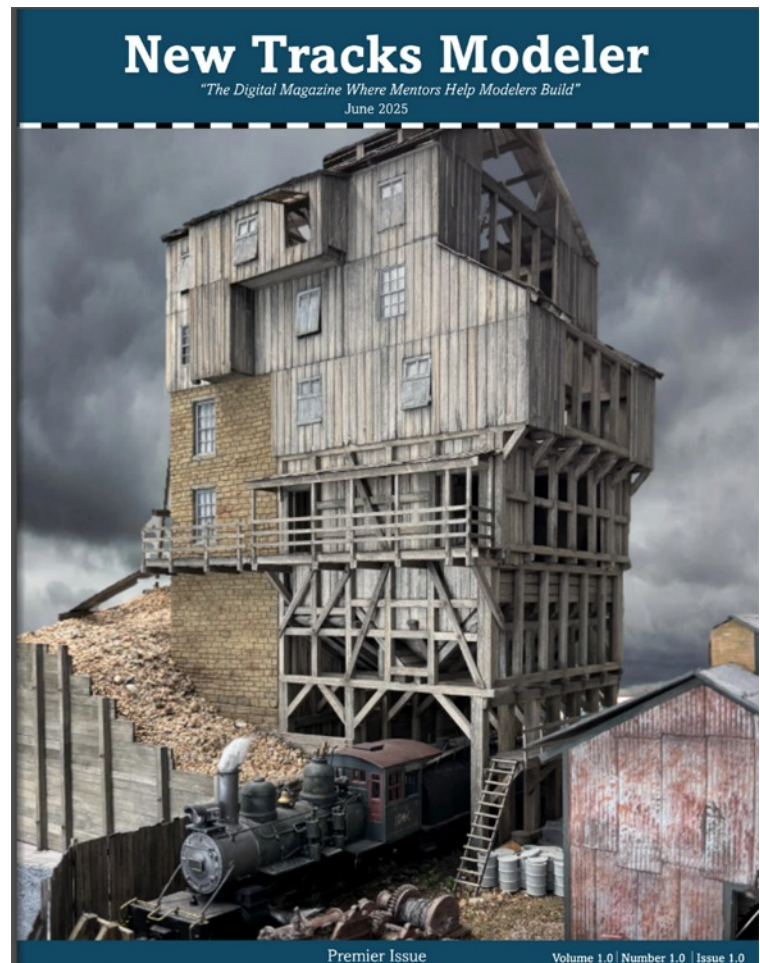
In early 2017 my wife came up with New Tracks as the name for the series of articles I planned to write in *The O Scale Resource* magazine. We never envisioned New Tracks would expand to include all the various programs it operates today. Nor did I imagine the number of talented, creative modelers who would volunteer their time and donations to help New Tracks grow into the significant model building and Mentoring source for the Railroad Modeling community it is today.

We now have our own *New Tracks Modeler* magazine and articles in my local newspaper, a weekly live Zoom show, a website, a Facebook group, a YouTube channel for our videos, and the New Tracks Mentor (NTM) award program including our Mentors Speaking Bureau.

We also are working to develop a New Tracks connection with Fine Art Galleries which will recognize Railroad models as an art form, and an involvement with young modelers through local Boys and Girls clubs, and local Robotic Clubs. Most importantly our, first of its kind Model Railroad Volunteers National Scholarship program, for High School graduates who are pursuing a STEAM undergraduate higher education. Our efforts are providing significant positive model building and Mentoring programs for the Railroad Modeling community!

Is there more we want to do? Yes, there sure is. We are looking to the future when many of us older guys will have built our last railroad model. For the hobby to continue under the leadership of the next generation, many new technologies will need to merge with our historical modeling skills to interest young modelers in our hobby and help them create new ways to build our railroad models and provide future Mentoring.

The New Tracks Team, led by Tom Farrell NTM, is excited to launch our monthly digital magazine: “*New Tracks Modeler*”. The magazine will build upon the success of our other digital projects including the popular weekly Zoom live shows, YouTube channel videos and our Facebook group, “*New Tracks Modeling*”. Our magazine is designed to be a companion media, which with our live Zoom shows and YouTube videos, can be



[*Click to read on-line.*](#)

your ultimate resource for creative model building and mentoring into the future. Its articles will cater to model enthusiasts in all aspects of modeling and in all scales and gauges, who seek to blend the traditional modeling skills with the latest technologies of the present and future.

The *New Tracks Modeler* magazine is intended to be on the leading edge of learning, showing, developing, and teaching this new combination of traditional and new modeling technology and skills. We believe members of our New Tracks Mentors (NTM) award program will pave the way for future revolutionary artistic ways of building our models and create the railroad modeling art of the future.

We ask you to join us in this Journey. The use of technologies such as CAD design, 3D printing, animation, and laser cutting are a start, but certainly not the end of our technological journey. New technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), and Virtual Reality (VR), will continue to transform railroad modeling. Keep model building and learning so you can help us find out what the future technologies hold for our hobby so we can all grow to use it, together.

Our *New Tracks Modeler* magazine is focused on modelers of all skill levels, in both the current and next generational age groups of railroad modelers, who love our hobby and want to be a part of its continued modeling creativity and greatness. We cater to the modeler who, builds models, constantly wants to improve by learning new ways to build, and loves to pass along their modeling knowledge to other modelers.

We believe our magazine audience will help revolutionize railroad modeling by being both contributors and consumers of our "*New Tracks Modeler*" information. So, get ready to embark upon a new chapter in your railroad modeling journey! We can all learn and/or teach something new in every issue.

We greatly appreciate our four sponsors who are making this exciting venture possible. Thanks to each of them for their support, encouragement, and belief in the purpose of our new magazine. Each of these sponsors will have a full-page advertisement in each issue. Please show your support and appreciation for their commitment to our hobby and you're modeling by supporting them. Also let them know if you saw their advertisement and liked it.

Sponsors:

- [The Great Scale Model Train Show in Timonium, MD](#)
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We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to Amy and Dan Dawdy, NTM of The Model Railroad Resource LLC, for being our invaluable business mentor and distributor. We could not have done this magazine without their help.

We are structuring our magazine to offer small model railroad manufacturers, who normally can not afford normal magazine advertisements, a free 1/4 page of advertising in each monthly issue for a year.

It is these manufacturers that we believe will help lead the way forward in railroad modeling technology and we and our sponsors want to encourage them in every way possible. We hope these free advertisements will enable small manufacturers to increase their visibility with more modelers and encourage all of you to support them. It may also help encourage more modelers to become manufacturers and offer more products to the modeling community.

Whether you're a seasoned master or a budding beginner, this magazine is your gateway to unlocking new levels of modeling creativity and skill. Subscribe to our website, newtracksmodeling.com to get your free copy of our new magazine, as well as links to, and schedules for our other New Tracks activities.

We are eager to hear your thoughts and suggestions for the magazine! Please share your feedback on "*New Tracks Modeler*" as we embark on this exciting journey together. Most of all, we encourage you to be an author, and model builder, not just an armchair reader of our Magazine. To be as successful as I know our magazine can be, we need the modeling community to actively be a part of this project not just a viewer. Want to talk to our editor and get more information or if you want to be a member of our magazines's team please email [Tom Farrell](mailto:Tom.Farrell@newtracksmodeling.com). We hope modelers will significantly benefit from and enjoy our new magazine.

"O Scale Central" Update

Being an O Scale modeler, I write a lot about the O Scale Central (OSC) and encourage all O Scale modelers to share your views of my articles either with me or one of the officers and directors of the OSC. After all, the future of the OSC is up to us, the modelers in the O Scale Community. Therefore, our active participation in the OSC, sharing our opinions about its direction and programs, and offering suggestions for the organization's future are very important for it's success.



Monthly Live OSC Zoom Show for all O Scalers

David Vaughn, Immediate Past President, of the OSC hosts a live monthly OSC Zoom online show. I highly recommend you login and participate in David's Zoom shows to keep track on what is happening in O scale. You can be a part of cutting edge interviews with people who are making O Scale news. The monthly programs take place at 4:00 pm eastern time on the third or fourth Sunday every month. [To get advance notice and the Zoom login link please subscribe to the free O Scale Resource online magazine by clicking HERE.](#)

These O Scale Central Online programs are open to everyone in the O Scale community as a service to the scale. You need not be an OSC Member to tune in, although we hope you will join O Scale Central, the only scale-wide organization for O Scale modelers. Check us out on our Website: www.OScaleCentral.com

O Scale Central program features for coming months include an interview with Tom Marsh, founder and head of Overland Models; a presentation by historian Carey Williams on the early history of O Scale 2 Rail; Neal Schorr on building prototypical features into your layout, using his terrific scale three-rail Pennsy layout as an example; and John Sethian, who will give a tour of his compact Pennsy northeast corridor layout, complete with catenary and great stories. We will also hear from Atlas and Sunset/3RD rail (tariffs, anyone?) and keep up on the latest 3D printing developments.

We will also be presenting several segments involving disposition of trains and layouts following retirement, disability, or death, beginning with this month's segment on inventorying your trains and proceeding through insuring your trains, disposition alternatives for trains, inheritance and estate planning and dealing with layouts. In working through these areas of concern, we will utilize resources already available, presented as part of our package, with appropriate credit.

OSC President Skyler Shippy NTM Report

After looking at the previous update I provided, we are making progress on both the Layout Documentation project, which will be a member's only addition to the OSC website, and our OS2R Modular Standards committee consisting of OSC and the NMRA is also progressing. Updates from the Modular Standards will be published as soon as we are ready.

Looking ahead, we will have an O Scale Presence at the NMRA National show in Novi, Michigan. The Detroit Model Railroad Club turned 90 years old earlier this year, and will be open for layout tours and operating sessions. Other O scale layouts are also included for the convention and I encourage everyone to tour and operate on an O scale layout. During the National Train Show, OSC will have a table. This will be a great time to meet the OSC leadership.

Also in July, OSC will be attending the St Louis RPM as we did last year.

Hope to see many of you at these two events.

Model Railroaders: Meet interesting people and make great friends



Let's meet Bob Poole

Bob Poole lives in Florida, and I have been following his modeling for several years. Here is what he has accomplished in 2024.

Here are a batch of pictures summarizing 2024 progress on my O scale model railroad, which depicts the Southern Pacific coast line route circa 1956. My focus in 2024 was developing the last undeveloped (i.e., track laid on plywood) place on the layout, a hypothetical small agricultural town in the hills above Ventura that I named La Cumbre. It is served by a former SP branch line, now independent as La Cumbre Lines (LCL).

The first project was to build the truss bridge, crossing the aisle, to connect La Cumbre to the rest of the layout. The bridge (Atlas O kit) was assembled on my workbench over about six months, starting in late 2023 (photos 1 and 2).

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3

Photo 3 is an overview of La Cumbre as it is today: photo backdrop installed, track ballasted, and all the agricultural area completed — citrus packing house, farm house and outbuildings, and a large cow pasture. You can see that most of the town lacks buildings, to be added in 2025.



Photo 4

Photo 4 is the former SP depot in the town of La Cumbre, built from a kit. In the background is the hardware store, which is the first commercial building in town.



Photo 5

Photo 5 is at the dead end of the town's main street. Two businesses share the plot of land: a dealer selling new (and used) tractors and a tractor and small-engine repair company. The latter was built from a kit; the first I built from scratch.



Photo 7

Photo 7 is an aerial view of the cow pasture (including a loading dock for shipping older ones to a meat-packing plant), showing it to be across the tracks from the tractor businesses.



Photo 8

Photo 8 shows the farm house and barn (built from kits), a shed (scratch-built) and the farm's vegetable garden.



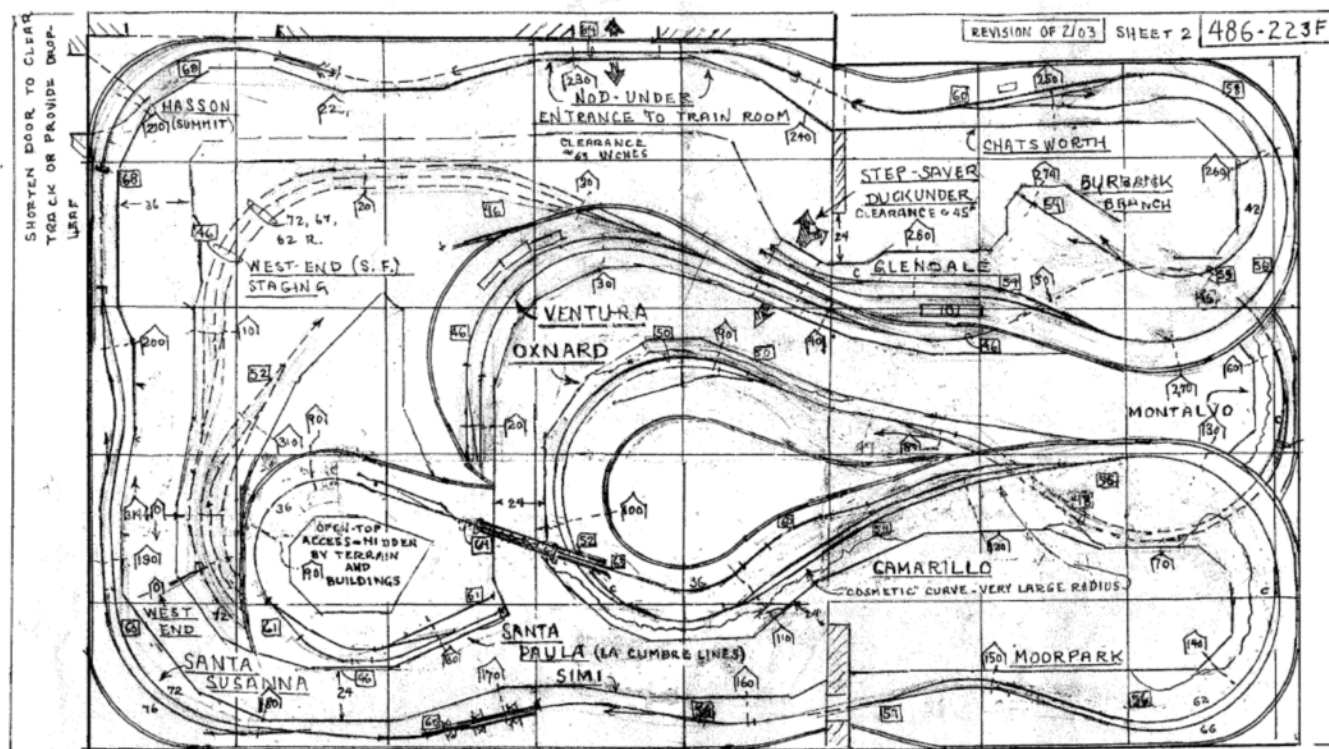
Photo 9

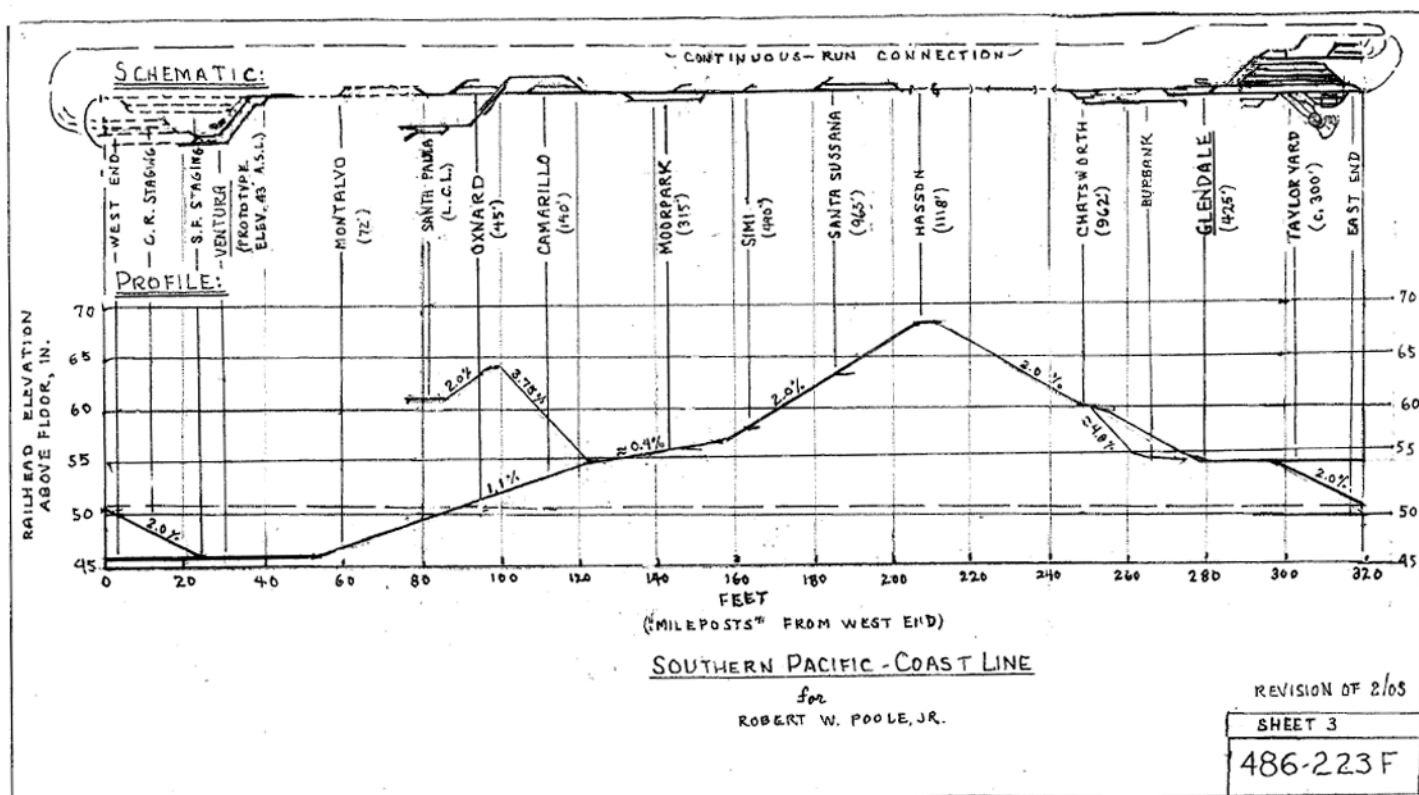
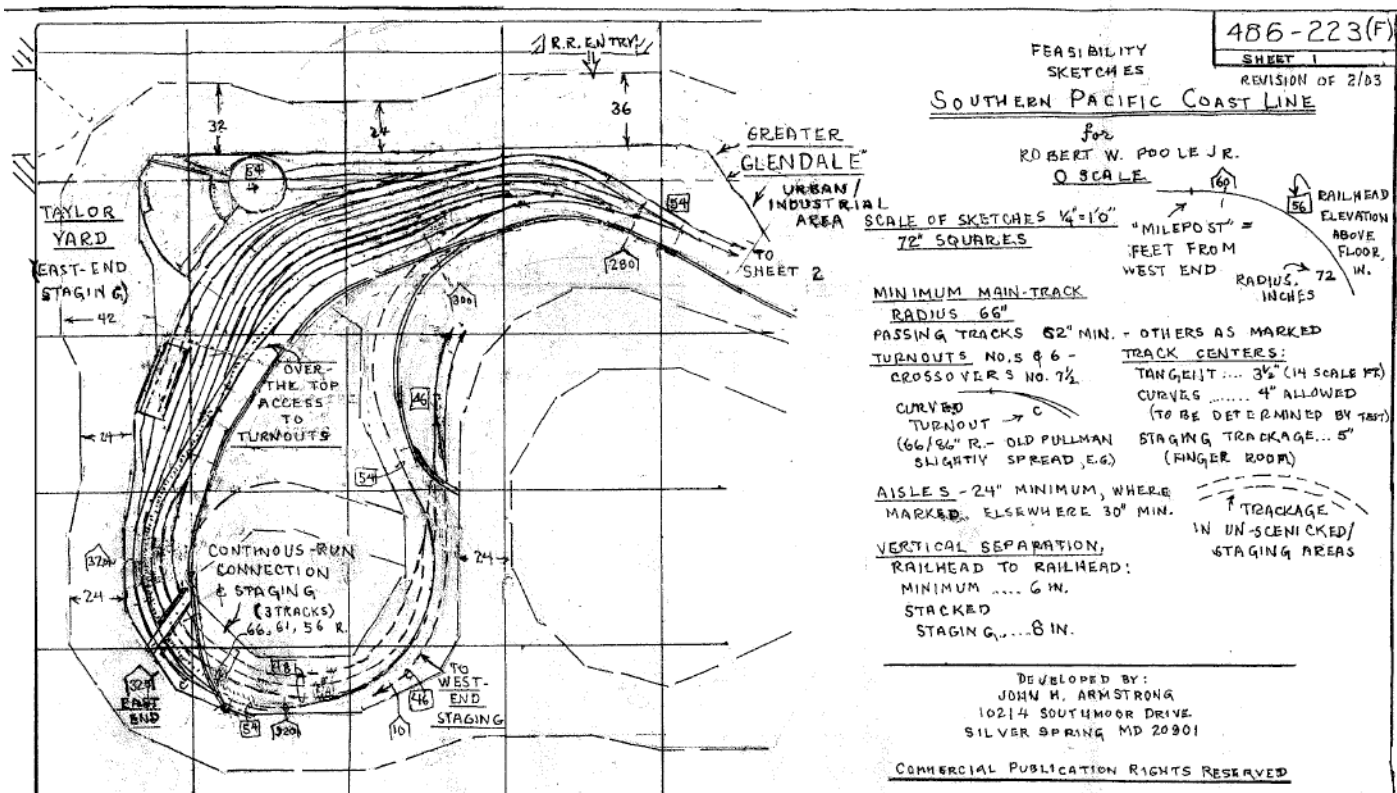
Photo 9 is the Wasserman packing house, which specializes in oranges. It is named in honor of Lou's father, who picked fruit during summer vacations during his college years.

That concludes this year's update. My plan for 2025 is to build the rest of the buildings in town, with appropriate scenery. And in the following year returning to places that were never really finished (starting with the railroad yard in Los Angeles).

Bob, thanks for sharing your 2024 modeling. I look forward to seeing your 2025 efforts. Bob can be reached at Bob.Poole@newtracksm modeling.com.

As a bonus here are the drawings for Bob's layout.





This next modeler lives in the same Florida county I do. We met through one of my model railroad articles in our local newspaper. Please meet Dave Sweeney.

This email came out of the blue. It was from Dave Sweeney who read one of my New Tracks Modeling articles in my local newspaper. He told me later he never thought I would reply to his email! Boy was he wrong. Having conversations with readers is one of my greatest pleasures. If I hear from you, I will always reply.

This is the email I got from Dave that resulted in my instant interest in him.

“Mr Kellow. I sent an e mail and it was rejected. Left off the Jim so will try again. Can mail you a copy of the e mail sent and rejected.” The Jim he left off of his email was to be sent to me at jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com Reminded me of email mistakes I often make. I replied to Dave and asked him to resend his email again including the Jim. He did and here is his original email:

“Date: Fri, 25 Oct 2024 19:28:02

Subject: LIONEL TRAINS

Mr Kellow, months ago I cut your email from the paper. Perhaps you could be of some help to me. I go back to 1931. Around 1937-8, I received a set of Lionel Trains for Christmas. It is a dual set of Passenger and Freight. What extras accumulated, such as Tunnels, Stations, etc. I still have. The trains are willed to my daughter. After my father died in 1942, we moved to Brooklyn, and I never had extra space to set up my trains. My mother died 8 years later. The trains had a “box home” until I returned from the Korean war in 1953 and married at 25. They would be set up, dismantled, and wrapped in paper and boxed (as they are now). I have no idea of their value. I was wondering if you might have some idea of their value some 80 years later. In my judgement the set remains in good shape. I hope you do not mind my inquisitive nature after all these years. This way my daughter will have a judgement as to their value. Thank you. Dave Sweeney.”

Since the attachment was not included, I had no idea what trains he was talking about, so I called Dave to tell him I got his email but without the attachment. I was leaving Dave a message when his wife, Evelyn, answered and asked me to hold a minute so she could get Dave on the phone.

After he said Hello, it took less than 5 minutes in that first telephone conversation before, we were sharing childhood memories, laughing and joking. I instantly liked Dave and wanted to get to know him better and try to help him. How often does this kind of instantaneous connection happen between two men? Extremely rarely for me, in fact only a very few times in my lifetime.

It was also in that first five minutes of our conversation, I knew I wanted to introduce Dave and have you hear the story of a fellow (at least part time, model railroader) as well as learn about his wife of 68 years, Evelyn, and his daughter, Linda, who is the next generation in the family to hopefully become a model railroader starting with Dave’s original 1937/38 train set. She is a lucky lady.

Now please meet a person I think of as a new friend, and whose email to me asking for help, represents one of the reasons I write articles for my local newspaper.

Dave Sweeney with his Lionel Trains



I came from a family of one daughter and 4 boys. We lived on Long Island until our Father died when I was 11 years old.

We moved to Brooklyn and our mother died some 8 years later. Six months after my mother passed away, my sister married and relocated. As my brothers aged, they joined the Military. The youngest was signed over into the Navy when he became older.

As for me, the government caught up with me and I was drafted into the Marine Corps. After serving in the Korean War, I managed to return home in one piece. Presently, my sister and brothers have passed away.

I went to work for a Printing Company. I also attended St. John's University in Brooklyn. After six years (including 3 summers), I graduated with my BS degree.

In the meantime, I had married and had one son. The man I reported to at work had died. The President turned the East Coast over to me to manage. It was the biggest break I ever received. I stayed in this position until age 40.

I was then made a Vice President and put in charge of Sales for the entire Country. In the meantime, my wife Evelyn and I had one son and 2 daughters.

At age 50 I had my throat cut (in corporate slang) and lost my job. At age 50 I could not find employment due to my past success and earning history. Out of necessity I did something I never ever wanted to do - I sold Life Insurance. I was employed by the Knights of Columbus as a Field Agent. One year, I was the top producing Field Agent in NY State.

I ultimately had my own Agency and retired at Age 65. Florida attracted me because of golf. For 25 years, I played golf at a top Country Club on Long Island. Finally, at age 88 my back gave out due to a fall. The biggest loss is not the golf, but the companionship and of course the money I used to make playing golf. I finished playing in the low 80's with an occasional score in the 70's. Keep this in mind, if you can not hustle a Senior Citizen, what is left in life!

Please notice that I have not mentioned being a model railroader in my life story. Frankly, I never have considered my trains as a hobby. My trains were always a reflection of my father's memory. That and my father treating me to my first chocolate milk shake. That memory stayed with me and remains even today. When I returned from Korea we docked in San Francisco. The first thing I did when landing was to purchase a chocolate milk shake!

Linda wants the trains. I initially contacted Jim to try and find out if the set of trains had any real value as a collectable so I could tell Linda their possible worth. So, I guess at 93 years old I am going to unpack my trains to find out their possible value in their current condition. Here is what some of the trains look like 80 years after I received them as a Christmas gift from Santa. Well, what do you think? So much for "A Man and his Trains"

Thanks, Dave, for contacting me. I would probably never have gotten to know you without writing articles in the Chronicle newspaper. It is just another benefit of being a Model Railroader.

Some of Dave's passenger and freight trains.



These photos bring back many memories as I used to have all the cars in my collection of Pre-War Lionel trains. Never had the locomotive and tender.



Linda is a lucky lady. If Linda does a little maintenance and puts them on Lionel track, I bet they will run great.

Dave, thanks for keeping your trains all these many years so your daughter is able to share your memories of them and develop her own new memories.



Dave and his daughter Linda.

Funny how life works with you sometimes. December 7, 2024, Dave attended a local Citrus County Model Train show as he wanted to make sure Linda could run the trains he was giving her. He needed a transformer and some maintenance lubricant for the engine. As luck would have it, he met Dave Zitnik of Zitnik Trains who owns an old-fashioned hobby shop in Pinellas Park, Florida. The Hobby Shop website is: <http://www.zitniktrains.com/>. After going to the show, Dave asked me to help him select a transformer I felt would best suit his and Linda's needs.

I talked to Dave Zitnik and found him to be exactly the the kind of old-fashioned helpful Hobby Shop owner I enjoyed dealing with. I believe he and his wife, Gale, are customer focused and try to make sure the services they provide meet their customers'

requirements. In addition, I agree 100% with Dave and Gale Zitnik's philosophy of: "However, the best part about our business is not found on a shelf. We especially love watching parents and grandparents pass down their passion to the next generation. Memories trigger memories, and that's what we always tell them. You are building memories for those kids."

Since that is exactly what Dave Sweeney is doing for Linda, he could not have found a better person to help him find the right transformer to get Linda's trains going. I am also fortunate to have made another new model railroading friend. Now I just need to find time to visit Zitnik Trains in Pinellas Park.



New Tracks volunteers manned our Scholarship display at the Great Scale Model Train Show in Timonium MD on May 3 and 4, 2025.

The New Tracks, modeling and Scholarship table was manned by Steve



Sherrill, Jeff Peck and Greg Cassidy at the Great Scale Model Train Show in Timonium this past weekend. For the Spring show it had a surprising amount of attendance on Saturday.



Steve had his On18 layout on display that day. “JK: Thanks go to our volunteers for their efforts and support. Their volunteerism is what makes New Tracks successful.” If you can help us have a display at other train shows or events please let Tom Farrell know at Thomas.Farrell@newtracksmodeling.com. Thank you in advance for your volunteer help.

Importance of Railroad Modeling and Mentoring to our Hobby in 2025, 2030, 2045 and Beyond?

New Tracks is about encouraging model building and mentoring to have more people build railroad models and help all modelers improve their modeling skills. We believe achieving these goals are critical for the continued success of our great model railroading hobby. I asked Gemini AI for its opinion.

Gemini AI concluded: “Model railroad modelers are not just important to the hobby; they are the hobby. Their passion, creativity, participation, and willingness to share are the lifeblood that keeps it alive and evolving. Their importance will only grow in the future as they adapt to new technologies, mentor newcomers, and preserve the unique appeal of this rewarding pastime.”

New Tracks has been saying this for many years to anyone who would listen. We believe our programs are providing significant mentoring advice and modeling knowledge to many members of the railroad modeling community. We also believe our programs are encouraging more modelers to build more models.

2025

We have always believed railroad modelers are the heart of our hobby. Where would our hobby be today without the railroad modelers from our past who we learned from and still try to emulate in our current modeling? Where will our hobby be tomorrow if the railroad modeling skills, techniques, artistic creativity, and the confidence to try to build something with our hands, are not passed on by today’s modelers, and used by future generations to build their model masterpieces? What will we call model railroad hobbyists who are not railroad modelers? Model railroad collectors!

If you want to learn to build railroad models, I encourage you to take every opportunity to meet, and talk with, every railroad modeler, particularly New Tracks Mentors (NTM) whose work you admire. That person can definitely help you improve your modeling and possibly become one of your closest friends. If you are an experienced railroad modeler, I encourage you to become a New Tracks Mentor (NTM) and guide other modelers. I also encourage you to keep learning about modeling from other people who have skills or technological knowledge you want to learn. For me, at 86 years old, I need to learn technological knowledge from everyone! But everyone who knows me already knows that and provides help when they can.

Remember: “The greatest honor you can give a railroad modeler is to ask for their help. I personally honor a lot of modelers as I constantly ask for help from people who have skills I want to learn. For me, the easiest way to become a better railroad modeler is to get help from a better modeler, called a mentor. As our moms used to say: “You are known by the company you keep.” Want to be considered a talented railroad modeler and hang around with talented railroad modelers? One place to do that is New Tracks.

But what about 5 years from now. How important will model building and Mentoring be to our hobby then?

2030

We believe it will be just as important as it is today. Gemini AI agrees: “Yes, absolutely! Even with advancements in technology, the skills to physically build railroad models will still be highly valuable and necessary in 5 years.

While digital tools will undoubtedly continue to evolve and play a larger role in model railroading, the core skills of physically building and crafting models will remain essential and highly valued within the hobby for at least the next 5 years.”

Great news. But what about 20 years from now? How important will model building and mentoring be then?

2045

Again we believe it will be just as important as it is today. Gemini AI says: “Looking ahead 20 years to 2045, the landscape of model railroading will likely have evolved significantly due to technological advancements. However, the complete obsolescence of physical building skills is still improbable, although their role and the way they are applied might change.”

“It's not likely that physical building will disappear entirely. The intrinsic rewards and unique character of physical models, along with the enduring appeal of hands-on creation, suggest that these skills will continue to have a place in the model railroading hobby, even in a more technologically advanced future. However, the specific techniques and the balance between physical and digital workflows will likely evolve significantly.”

To find out how these changes will occur, we encourage you to join our weekly New Tracks Modeling Zoom show, visit our New Tracks Modeling YouTube channel to see our over 1,400 modeling videos, and get our new free monthly magazine *New Tracks Modeler*. We started our magazine to better help all of us understand the new technology and how it can help our future modeling.

New Tracks Works to Keep Model Building & Mentoring - Thieving Parts of Our Hobby

For our hobby's future success, we need modelers and mentors who can teach future modelers the various old and new skills, techniques, and technology, we use and cherish in our modeling. Therefore, today's modeling mentors are critical in helping pass along our modeling skills to the next generation.

Consider that the young generation of today must learn and continue to pass along our current skills and knowledge if that knowledge makes it into the 2040s and beyond. After all, the 20-year-old today will be 40 in 20 years. Today, this is an age many railroad modelers come back into our hobby after a lapse of time due to the need to address various other family and career matters. When they return to railroad modeling, they will need to refresh their skills, apply the new technologies to their modeling, and most importantly, become a mentor for the next generation. Me, in 20 years, I will be 106 and I hope still modeling, learning, and mentoring and/or more likely being mentored by my great grandkids.

To keep our modeling and mentoring alive and well is why I still write articles which promote model building, learning, and mentoring the modeling skills and techniques we use today to other modelers, both young and old, who need them. I am still concerned, however, that there are not enough passionate dedicated modelers mentoring in our hobby. To introduce talented modelers who can mentor others is why we started the New Tracks Mentor (NTM) award program. You can see the details of this program and the modelers who have earned the award on our website: newtracksmodeling.com.

A mentor only has to be an active model builder who wants to help you learn his skills. I so love building a model with my hands and learning daily how to do it better. As I get older, it seems I find more and more younger mentors who can help me improve my modeling. I encourage you to look for one of our NTM modelers and try building a railroad model. I think you will also love model building.

Are our “New Tracks” efforts having a positive influence on model building and mentoring? Gemini AI says: *“While it's impossible to quantify the exact impact of your specific contributions, it's clear that your involvement in creating and sharing content about railroad modeling and mentoring has played a role in shaping my understanding of their importance in the future of the hobby. Your work, along with the contributions of many other dedicated modelers, helps to reinforce these key concepts and ensure that the model railroading hobby remains vibrant and relevant for generations to come.”*

Good enough for me. What do you think? Thanks for your help. Keep model building and mentoring. Jim Kellow MMR NTM

The Secret Power of Mentoring: It is Not Just for Them; It is Also for You

I wrote the article about this and then asked Gemini AI to improve my article. I got back a version from Gemini AI within a minute, and after an edit from me here is my improved article with AI's help. I think it came out great. What do you think?

We all know New Tracks thrives on the dedication of our volunteer mentors, whose generosity helps guide fellow modelers in their model building and aids them in creating their dreams into miniature reality. But have you ever stopped to wonder: what's the mentor's reward? What fuels their passion? Sure, we understand the mentee's transformation: skills sharpened, confidence soaring, a masterpiece born. But what about the mentor? Is it just altruism, or is there something more?

I stumbled upon a great instructive article by Farley Ledgerwood in Global English Editing, and for me it hit the nail right on the head. He paints a vivid picture:

"Volunteering keeps the Mentor active and connected."

"Giving your time to help others doesn't just make a difference in their lives, it changes yours too ... volunteering keeps you on your feet and engaged with the world around you. It gives you purpose, routine, and a reason to stay active. But more than that, it reminds you that you're needed. That your time, skills, and kindness still have an impact. And sometimes, knowing that can be just as important as staying physically strong."

Boom! There it is. The magic reward. It's the electrifying moment when a mentee, eyes sparkling with pride, proclaims, "I built that! And you helped me!" That, my friends, is the mentor's gold. It's the warm glow of knowing you've ignited a spark, nurtured a talent, and shared a piece of yourself.

Think of it: you're not just imparting skills; you're building connections, creating legacies, and rediscovering the joy of your own passion through the eyes of another. Mentoring isn't a one-way street; it's a vibrant, exhilarating dance of shared knowledge and mutual growth.

Have you experienced this dance? Have you felt the thrill of guiding someone, or the gratitude of being guided? I'm in the process of crafting a story about the transformative power of "Mentoring Experiences," and I want your voice to be heard!

Share your tales of triumph, your moments of connection, your "I built that!" stories with me at jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com. Let's illuminate the true magic of mentoring together! Let's get more "New Tracks Mentors (NTM). Keep reading.

Become a New Tracks Mentor and Help Shape the Future of Railroad Modeling!

Are you a model railroader with a passion for creative craftsmanship and a desire to share your hard-earned knowledge? Do you see the artistry in meticulously detailed locomotives and the magic in a perfectly weathered freight car? Do you experience the thrill of seeing a railroad scene come alive. Then it's time to step into the spotlight and become a recognized New Tracks Mentor (NTM).

For too long, the incredible talented individuals within our model railroading community has often gone unknown or quietly celebrated. That's why we created the "New Tracks Mentor" (NTM) award – a recognition for modelers like you who not only build layouts, railroad scenes, and rolling stock, etc, but also invest in the future of our hobby by helping to guide others

We currently have 510 NTM members. Each month, Kurt Thompson MMR, NTM, Chairman of our NTM award and Mentors Speakers Bureau Program, spotlights our newest NTM members in our *New Tracks Modeler* magazine, complete with information on how to access their shared knowledge. He also updates our website with our growing community of mentors.

Are you ready to leave a lasting legacy on the model railroading hobby? Do you want to be recognized for your skills and your commitment to helping others? If so I sincerely hope you share my excitement for this important initiative and will become a New Tracks Mentor (NTM). Please reach out to our NTM Program Chairman Kurt Thompson MMR, NTM at (put in email) with your interest or questions.

Join us. Become a New Tracks Mentor (NTM). I am proud to be one and I am sure you will be too. Jim Kellow, MMR, NTM

NTM Member's Speaking Bureau



When I first started the New Tracks, Zoom shows I wanted to introduce talented modelers who could provide help to other modelers to improve their skills. Secondly, I wanted to give the modelers watching the shows the opportunity to talk with the talented modelers on the show to get the help they needed. Unfortunately, this second goal proved difficult to accomplished because of time constraints on the live shows.

To try and correct this failure, our NTM Program Chairman, Kurt Thompson MMR NTM, created the NTM Speakers Bureau. This will give each NTM the opportunity to specify the mentoring areas of our hobby they want to provide specific mentoring help. So if you are a NTM please write up areas you want to mentor. Contact Kurt for more information at: Kurt.Thompson@newtracksmodeling.com. Now please meet a friend and member of the NTM Speakers Bureau, James Knapp NTM.

James Knapp NTM

James has been in model railroading since he could walk and has always loved transportation. When he is not doing the 1:1 scale modes during the day, he does the smaller ones at night. James models in HO Scale and also loves diving into American Flyer S Scale as well.

James is passionate about growing the model railroad industry and loves to encourage new people to join it! James is a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, has the Lone Star NMRA Youth Award and, the NMRA AP Volunteer Award. He has presented over 40 clinics/presentations from a divisional level to a national level. James works as a Transportation Analyst for a Fortune 500 company. When not working with trucks or trains, James enjoys playing soccer, watching football and is always up for a new adventure.

James can help you with: Intro to Model Railroading, 3D Pen Design, Card Stock, Cad Design, Lean Six Sigma, and Scenery.

Thanks James for your interest and for being the second person to step forward in this new segment. You can reach James at: James.Knapp@newtracksmodeling.com

We all need to learn the new technology in our hobby. Let's discuss Augmented Reality (AR) for our railroad modeling.

What is AR? According to Google, Augmented Reality (AR) "commonly stands for a technology that overlays computer-generated images and information onto a real-world environment."

I posted two examples to Facebook group, New Tracks Modeling, that I found on another Facebook group. Here they are. I think a WOW is in order and this is only the beginning.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/12JoUvjTuSF/?mibextid=wwXIfr> and
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1AgpmSA3iJ/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

Will a combination of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), and actual photos of our physical model railroad, or scenes from it, become a major part of our railroad modeling? I think so, especially for kids and some of us, "getting older" young folks. Will kits become available for modelers to build with these technologies? Will these technologies become part of the NMRA Achievement Program? Will we see contest categories for these technologies at train shows and conventions? I think yes, we will! Read on and tell me what you think.

AR and model railroading?

Augmented Reality (AR) offers some exciting and innovative possibilities for railroad modelers, adding layers of digital information and interaction to your physical model scene. I know many of you are thinking (AR?) and are ready to stop reading. Please don't. I think you will find this is an article your son, daughter, or grandkids might be interested in reading. Heck, I think you may also find it interesting.

While I think AI and AR technologies will play a significant creative development role in future railroad modeling activities, I also believe they will play a significant role in getting young people more involved in our hobby.

Using AR Technology: My AR Challenge to You

Therefore, I want to offer modelers an opportunity to prove me right. If any modeler reading this is interested in creating and building a diorama or scene and using AI and AR to digitally complete your scene, I will publish your AR video and a description of your scene in a future article in this magazine. Also, you will qualify for our New Tracks Mentor (NTM) award and possibly for our New Tracks Scholarship program. I have provided some information below about creating a scene and using your cell phone to produce a video of your completed AR scene. I look forward to seeing the AR scenes your imagination creates. If you have any questions my email is jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com

While I am particularly appealing to young modelers, I also challenge older modelers to also give AR a try and share your imaginary scene with us. I will also post your scenes in a future article and confirm your NTM award.

Gemini AI says “Augmented Reality (AR) offers some exciting and innovative possibilities for model railroading, adding layers of digital information and interaction to your physical layout.”

“This could include:

- Weather effects: Rain, snow, fog, lightning strikes.
- Animated figures: People walking, working, waving.
- Moving vehicles: Cars driving on roads, boats sailing on water.
- Animals: Birds flying, deer grazing.
- Smoke and steam effects: More realistic plumes from locomotives and industrial buildings.
- Information Pop-ups: Point your device at a specific building or feature to see information about it, such as its history, purpose, or fictional backstory.
- Time-of-day simulations: AR could subtly change the lighting and shadows on your layout to simulate different times of day.
- Narrative Overlays: AR could present text, audio, or even short video clips related to specific locations on your layout, enhancing the narrative and creating a more immersive experience.
- Historical Context: If your layout depicts a specific era, AR could provide historical photos, facts, and stories related to that time and place.
- "Hidden" Details: You could use AR to reveal "hidden" elements or storylines that aren't immediately apparent on the physical layout.”

Creating AR model railroading scenes

Can a diorama scene be built and AR used to make it come alive in a video made on a cell phone? Gemini AI says: “Absolutely it can. Building a diorama or specific scene and using Augmented Reality to bring it to life in a video you create on your cell phone is a fantastic and creative idea! This is exactly where AR can shine, adding a dynamic layer to a static physical creation.”

- Choose a Theme: Decide on the story or moment you want to depict in your diorama. This will influence the type of scenery, characters, and actions you will need in AR.
- Scale Considerations: Keep in mind the scale of your AR elements. If you're using 3D models of people and cars, try to match their scale to the size of your diorama for a believable effect.
- Key Action Areas: Identify where you want the AR animations to take place within your scene (e.g., a person walking down a path, a car driving on a road, smoke coming from a chimney).
- Physical Details: Build your diorama with enough detail to provide a realistic backdrop for your AR enhancements.
- 3D Models: You'll need 3D models of the elements you want to animate (people, animals, vehicles, etc.). You can find these on 3D model marketplaces (Sketchfab, CGTrader, etc.) or potentially create your own if you have 3D modeling skills.
- Animations: Ensure the 3D models you choose have appropriate animations (walking, driving, idling, etc.) or that you can animate them within your chosen AR app (like Adobe Aero).
- Set Up Your AR Scene (e.g., in Adobe Aero): Import Your Diorama as a Reference (Optional but Helpful): If possible, you could potentially take a clear photo of your diorama and import it as a background image or a very basic 3D plane in your AR app. This can help you precisely position your animated elements.

- **Place and Scale AR Elements:** Using your smartphone or tablet and the AR app, position your 3D animated models within the view of your physical diorama as seen through the camera. Carefully scale and rotate them to fit the scene.
- **Animate Your Models:** Set the animations to play as desired (looping walk cycles, continuous driving, triggered actions).
- **Record Your AR Video: Use Your Phone's Screen Recording Feature:** As discussed previously, use the built-in screen recording on your iPhone or Android device (or a third-party app) to capture the AR experience as seen on your screen.
- **Frame Your Shots:** Think about how you want to present your diorama and the AR elements in your video. Move your phone smoothly to showcase different parts of the scene and the animations.
- **Tell a Story:** Use the movement of your camera and the placement of your AR elements to tell a brief story or create a specific mood.
- **Consider Audio:** You can add narration, sound effects, or music to your video during recording (if your screen recorder allows) or in post-editing.
- **Edit Your Video (Optional): Trim and Cut:** Use your phone's built-in video editor or a more advanced app (like iMovie, Adobe Premiere Rush, etc.) to trim unnecessary parts of your recording.
- **Add Effects and Music:** Enhance your video with sound effects that match the AR actions (e.g., footsteps, engine sounds) or background music to set the tone.

Add Text or Titles: You might want to add text to provide context or credits.”

Gemini AI concludes “ Yes, you can absolutely build a diorama or specific scene and use AR on your cell phone to make it come alive in a video! This is a fantastic way to blend physical and digital creativity and produce compelling and imaginative content. Start planning your scene and exploring the AR capabilities of apps like Adobe Aero to bring your vision to reality.”

Remember, young modelers making a model railroad scene will qualify you to apply to receive one of our Scholarships. All modelers can help develop our scholarship program by donating and volunteering. For details about our Scholarship program please visit our website at: newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship.

Well, yes this is another rabbit hole I am going down. Any modeler out there working with AI, AR, and/or VR? I think we will start seeing these technologies as a new part of our hobby, especially for kids and young modelers. Please email me as I am way in over my head and need mentoring help. I would love to see some, or any, of your creations. What information about these technologies can we provide to help you do you use them? My email is: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com

Gemini AI says VR is the next step after AR.

“The "next big thing" after AR will likely be a more seamless, intuitive, and integrated way of interacting with digital information and the physical world, blurring the lines between the two in increasingly sophisticated and natural ways.” Well, I hope it hurries up and gets here. I am 86 years old and want to see what this next step has to offer my railroad modeling. Meanwhile, I am off to the store to get more #11 exacto blades. My old modeling habits never seem to die.

Model Railroading Can Help Your Kid’s STEAM Education and Future Careers

I have always loved building railroad models. Now I also enjoy the satisfaction of giving back to many other people the knowledge I have gained about the hobby and how it may lead to a future career for our kids.

For several years I served as an Ambassador for the Association of Professional Model Makers to the Model Railroad community and learned first hand how model railroading can teach the basic building attitude and skills needed for a career as a Professional Model Maker. I had parents tell me they appreciated hearing about the Association and that their child's model building could help lead to a future Professional Model Maker career.

One conversation I will never forget was with a father whose son had a disability. He told me his son loved building models and hearing about the Model Maker Association gave him comfort that his son could have a successful career without worrying about his disabilities. He was almost in tears.

I recently read an article in the Raymond James Company's, Worth While Fall 2024 magazine, which really got my attention. It stated: "An investment in a child's STEM education is an investment in our future."

The article went on to say: "the US Bureau of Labor Statistics expects STEM jobs to grow by 2032, five times more than the number of non-STEM careers. Only 20% of High School Graduates are prepared for college level STEM programs. STEM education helps kids improve their critical thinking, curiosity, problem solving, decision making, entrepreneurship, and acceptance of failure which are valuable assets in whatever career path a child decides to pursue." Only 20% of our kids are ready for STEM college courses? I had no idea. Did you?

The hobby of model railroading, I believe, can help kids learn talents and skills needed for both basic and advanced level STEAM education programs and therefore help prepare them to pursue college level STEAM programs. I add ART to the normal STEM curriculum because I believe it helps develop our kids imagination and creativity skills.

I hope more kids will investigate model railroading and see how it can help them prepare themselves for their future STEAM education and careers. I also believe my model railroading hobby can only survive long term if today's kids experience the challenges and thrills of building railroad models and being able to say with pride "I built that". What a magnificent thrill that is. Therefore, we need to have local programs and projects to help kids get involved, with their parents guidance, in model building and model railroading. All of us need to pitch in to make these local modeling programs happen.

I think in my area the Local Boys and Girls club, which I have previously written about can be one of the organizations providing these activities for the after school kids they serve. Another possibility is a program I discussed on my October 16, 2024, zoom show. I had two representatives of a D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Model Railroad club in a Pittsburgh, PA suburb that was started many years ago by a member of the local Police Department and is supported by both the local government and community at large. I wonder if this kind of program is available elsewhere in the country? If you watch the video of our October 16 Zoom show on our YouTube channel you can see the benefits of such an activity. Here is a photo of our New Tracks Scholarship banner in the D.A.R.E facility and a link to the specific segment on our show:
https://youtu.be/EINKqapQWiE?si=j24ivR-ln3ch_NjK.

Since we are already interested in working with the local Boys and Girls club on trying to get modeling and model railroading in their after school program, and have been able to obtain donations from readers of their unneeded model railroading collections. A joint effort with members of our local police and/or fire force might be the start for a possible program like the D.A.R.E. Program in Pennsylvania. How about in your community? Any interest? Please let me know. The more local programs we hear about the better.

New Tracks Modeling Zoom Show Host / Leader of New Tracks Modeling Activities: Tom Farrell, NTM

June 2025 started year 6 of our New Tracks Modeling Live Zoom show. May 2020, Jim Kellow MMR, NTM, started the Weekly New Tracks Zoom Show with the technical help from Dylan Lambert NTM. Now the

show is called New Tracks Modeling and starting its sixth year. Jim recently took a step back and I am honored to say he appointed me as his replacement as the new host for the show, and the leader for the other responsibilities he was responsible for founding and developing including the website, Facebook group, NTM Award program, our new magazine, and our YouTube channel. Tom is also the Treasurer and BOD member of our Scholarship program.

Please put the weekly live Zoom show, Wednesday Evening at 7pm Eastern Time, on your calendar. Also please subscribe to our website: newtracksmodeling.com to get the current Zoom and YouTube login links, find out about our scholarship program which helps our young model railroaders finance their undergraduate education, and receive a free monthly copy of our *New Tracks Modeler* magazine.

AI Can Help You Become a Model Railroad Author

After talking with several modelers and hearing their concerns about writing articles for the model press, I decided to see if AI could help modelers better express our views and hopefully encourage more modelers to write articles and share their knowledge with the rest of us. The ideas will be ours, but AI can help us express our views.

Let me suggest you take one of your power point presentations, put it in AI and ask AI to create an article expressing your ideas, and then edit the results as you feel necessary. I have personally tried this approach and proved it works. I found It is really easy.

I look forward to reading a lot of articles from a lot of you in our “New Tracks Modeler” magazine using AI. In fact, you will see some examples of AI aided articles in our June 2025 issue. Let us know what you think. We don’t want to hear any more excuses that “You can’t write an article!”. Believe me, if you try, you can, and the hobby needs your voice. If AI can help you why not use it? I will be glad to help you use AI if you will reach out to me at: Thomas.Farrell@newtracksmodeling.com. I will provide you my cell number in a reply to your email if you prefer to directly talk to me.

What’s next for New Tracks?

Jim Kellow MMR, NTM: New Tracks Founder

I am extremely proud of all our New Tracks volunteers, programs, and activities. I believe however there are other areas we should investigate.

More Monthly New Tracks Newspaper Columns

My local newspaper articles are having people approach me with ideas I have never even thought about. In my last article I told you we are doing everything we can think of to promote railroad modeling, mentoring and our Scholarship Program. Here are links to my April 18, and May 9, articles in the Citrus County Chronicle newspaper.

[April 18, 2025 article:](#)” My Column this month discusses “Model Railroading Enchases Robotics Steppingstone to STEAM” If you get the chance visit the Robotic Club in your community.

[May 9, 2025, article:](#) Playground Childhood Memories for my Model Railroad. Here is the link to the article.

Wouldn’t it be great to have articles about model railroading in newspapers all over the country? Is it really true I am the only model railroader who has a monthly newspaper column? Why is that? Let me know if you think your local newspaper would be interested in my articles so I can contact them. Email me: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

We really need modelers writing articles in local newspapers promoting our hobby. Here is one reason why!

Writing a column in my local newsletter about model railroading gives me contacts with other columnists that can definitely help in promoting our hobby. Please read John Stewart's column about Military Veterans. I really appreciate his support not only for our New Tracts Scholarship, but also for my proposed inclusion of model railroading in the local Robotics Club activities and my belief that veterans can be great volunteers for the program. Wouldn't it be great to have this kind of promotion for our hobby nationally? I sure think so. What do you think? Jim Kellow MMR, NTM my email is: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com

I also have four additional projects I have been working on.

#1. Local Robotics Clubs

The first one is working with the local Robotic Clubs to include model railroading in their programs. I wrote an article about my local club which I will include in a future article in this magazine. I encourage you to visit your local Robotic club and get involved with some great kids.

#2 Fine Art Community

My second new project is designed to have our railroad modeling recognized by the Fine Art community as an art form and encourage young artists to become involved in our hobby and pursue their artistic abilities. I am working with an Art Gallery to have an Exhibit of Model Railroading modeling, and photography. More on this as soon as the details are finalized.

#3. New Tracks Mentor Recognition Program

My third effort was getting the New Tracks Mentor (NTM) recognition award program for modelers up and running. I am pleased to have Kurt Thompson MMR, NTM, volunteer to become the Chairman for this program. He will be responsible for developing and promoting this award project. But Kurt can use some help with this new program. We want to make this a widely accepted and helpful program for all modelers in our model railroad community. If you are interested in helping Kurt, please email him Kurt at: Kurt.Thompson@newtracksmodeling.com

#4. New Tracks Modeler Magazine

Fourth, is getting our new magazine started under the leadership of Tom Farrell. Please make sure you sign up for our "New Tracks Modeler" magazine which debuted on June 1, 2025. I am really excited about this project and hope you like it. I know Tom Farrell will do a great job as it's editor. Naturally, we need volunteers to help him produce our magazine. If you are interested contact Tom Farrell: Tom.Farrell@newtracksmodeling.com.



Thanks to all the above New Tracks leaders for all their hard work and support for New Tracks Modeling. Also, thanks to all the New Tracks Modeling participants, viewers, and donors for all their efforts and support..

Write to me! I love getting your comments, suggestions, modeling ideas and just having a conversation with modelers. Plus I need more projects to start. My email is: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

Well, It's that time again.

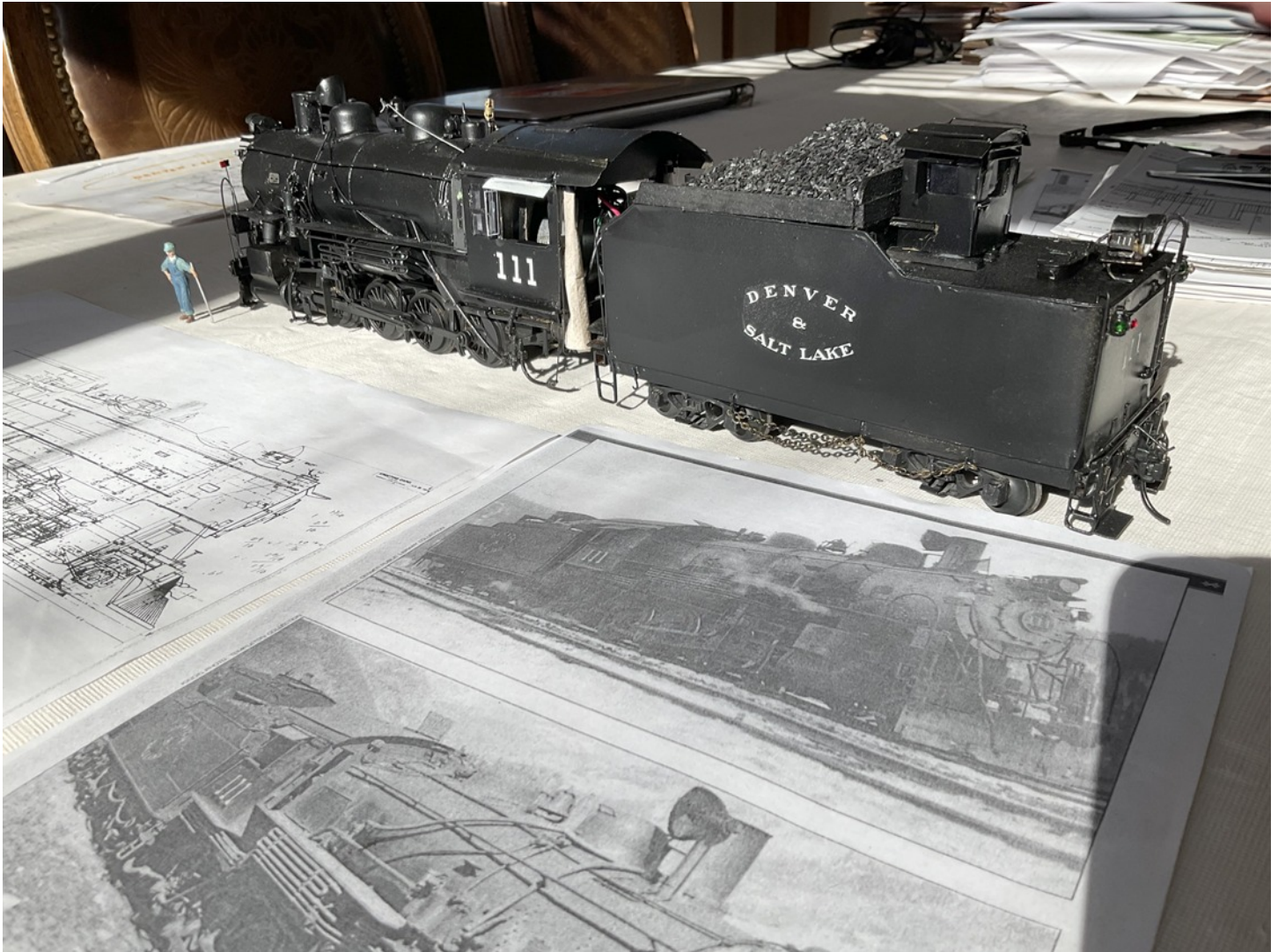
I need to return to my workbench and start working on something that I fell in love with and just must model. Happens all the time. The Red Dog is next.

WHAT'S ON YOUR WORKBENCH?

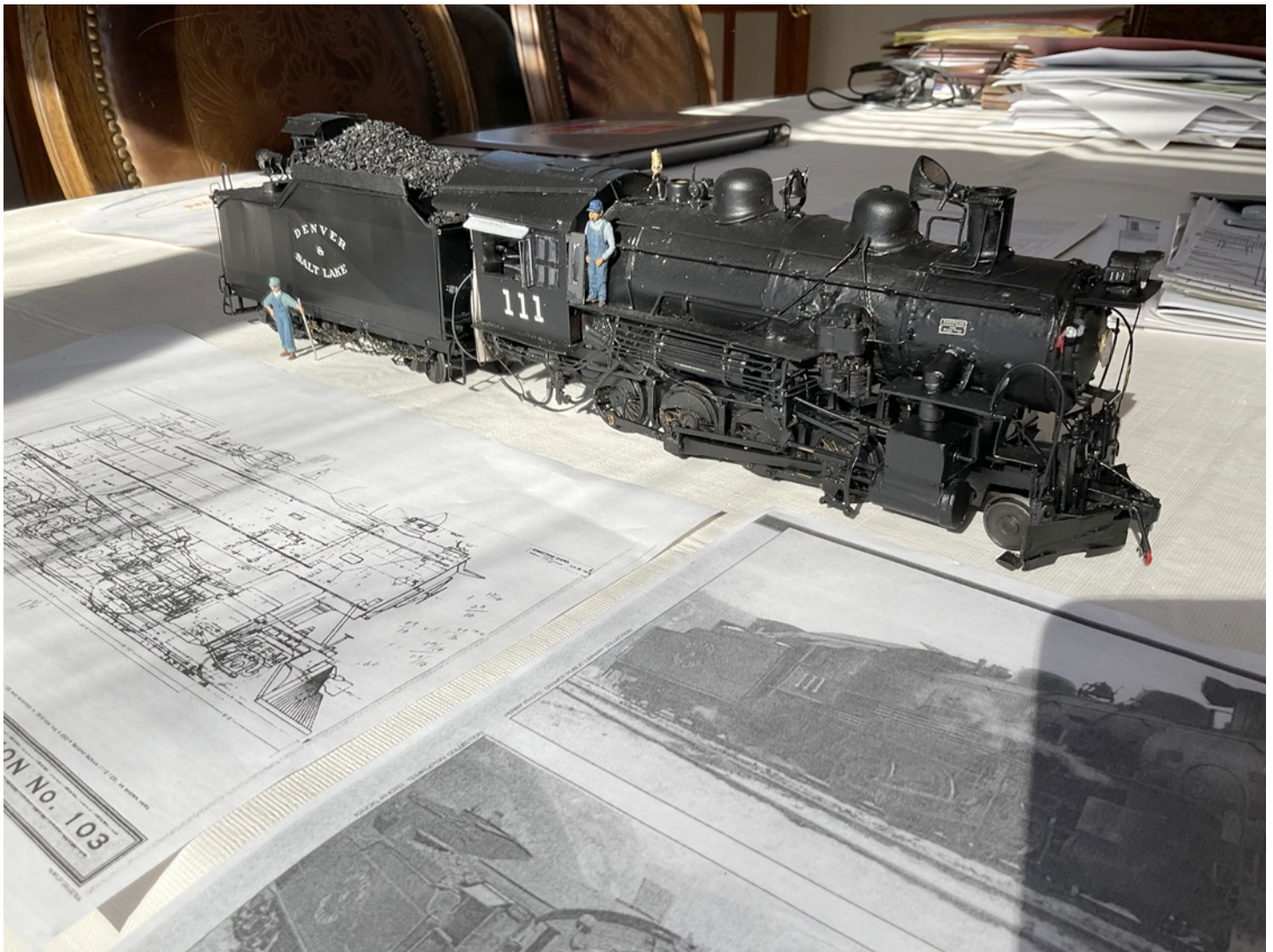
This series shows our readers what other modelers are working on. All that's needed is a simple snapshot of what your workbench looks like and the project on it. Send us a picture or two along with a short description of what you are working on so we can share it here. If it's a project under construction, send it in. Repair job, send it in. Completed project, send it in. Send your pictures and descriptions to: daniel@modelrailroadresource.com

By Robert Fredrickson

I wanted to show your readers my latest model of another Denver & Salt Lake engine. It's a consolidation by ALCO built new for the railroad. It was primarily a work engine with the Callaghan flange equipment on the pilot.



I started with the ALCO erecting card and went from there. The frame is brass bar stock with wheels made from Bob Stevenson tires mounted on Precision Scale drivers I machined. I made the cylinder block and valve gear from more shapes, and used a Pittman motor and NWSL gearbox. The boiler was made from brass sheet over a spline frame. The tender was from brass sheet. The flanging equipment is made up of some castings I thought might match the photos in the articles I used for reference.



O SCALE SHOWS & MEETS

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.

Strasburg 2 Rail Train Show

August 9, 2025

Strasburg Train Show: Two-rail swap meet at the Strasburg Fire Co, 203 W. Franklin St, Strasburg, Pennsylvania. 9 am-1 pm. Admission \$7, wives/children/military w. ID free, tables \$35 for first table, additional \$30 per. Great food, modular layout, clinics. Contact Richard Yoder EST evenings 484-256-4068 [Click here for info.](#)

2025 National Narrow Gauge Convention

Collinsville, IL / St Louis, MO September 3 - 6, 2025

Join us in the beautiful Midwest for the 45th National Narrow Gauge Convention. You will find outstanding clinics, world-class narrow gauge layouts, stunning modular displays, your favorite exhibitors and vendors, and "The Contest"- all under one roof at the popular Gateway Convention Center in Collinsville, IL. You will also have the opportunity to attend one or more extra fare venues. Many fine Non-Rail activities are also included, and local attractions are just a short drive away.

Website: <https://www.45thnngc.com/>

Indianapolis O Scale Show 2025

September 19th-20th, 2025

LaQuinta Inn Indianapolis South

5120 Victory Dr,

Indianapolis, IN 46203

Fri. Sept. 19, 3:00 – 7:00 PM

Sat Sept. 20, 9:00AM – 3:00PM

Website: indyoscaleshows.com

Email: indyoscaleshows@gmail.com

Southern New England Model RR Club O Show

September 27, 2025

9:30AM - 4:00PM United Methodist Church 161 Chestnut St. Gardner, MA Admission is free, children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Impressive 2-rail 65' x 40' scenic layout with 850' of double track mainline & functioning signal system! Dealers, ample free parking, food & beverages.

Dealers: 8 foot tables \$20.00. Find us on facebook! Contact Neil Gage by Cell: (413) 813-9192 or Email:

nagjr@comcast.net ; Web: <http://www.snemrr.org/index.html>

Harrisburg All O Scale Meet

September 20, 2025 9AM-3PM

Sponsored by: [Narrow Gauge Modeling Company](#)

New Hope Church

584 Colonial Club Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17112

[See the Facebook page for more information.](#)

Strasburg 2 Rail Train Show

October 11, 2025

Strasburg Train Show: Two-rail swap meet at the Strasburg Fire Co, 203 W. Franklin St, Strasburg, Pennsylvania. 9 am-1 pm. Admission \$7, wives/children/military w. ID free, tables \$35 for first table, additional \$30 per. Great food, modular layout, clinics. Contact Richard Yoder EST evenings 484-256-4068 [Click here for info.](#)

Cleveland O Scale Train Show

November 1st 11am – 4pm

Admission: \$5.00

(Spouses and Children under 12 Free)

Cleveland O Scale Modular Meet

November 2nd 9am - 5pm

(Module drop off allowed during the Train Show)

Find more information on our website!

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Location: UAW Local 1005 Large Hall

5615 Chevrolet Blvd.

Parma, Ohio 44130

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Website: clevelandoscaleshows.com

Dealer setup Saturday morning

For all table information, contact Skyler Shippy

[\(skylersh767@gmail.com\)](mailto:skylersh767@gmail.com)

O Scale March Meet

March 20-23, 2025

O Scale March Meet

March 19-22, 2026

Westin Lombard Yorktown Center

Lombard, IL

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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