

THE O *SCALE* RESOURCE

NEWS, REVIEWS, INFORMATION TO USE
**We're putting the "modeling" back
in Model Railroading! ®**
Volume 12 No. 4
March/April 2025



A Fleet for Operations Part 2
Finishing a Brass Freight Trailer
Cocoa Beach Prototype Rails 2025
Building a Southern Railroad 36' SU B oxcart Part 2
Finishing a PRB Santa Fe Heavyweight Chair Car Part 1
Super Detailing the All Nation Line NW2 Switcher Part 3
and so much more...

Published Bi Monthly

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March/April 2025
Volume 12 No. 4

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

Front Cover Photo

A spectacular PRB AT&SF heavyweight chair car sits on the rails. Santiago Pineda works his magic and adds ball bearings to the trucks.

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Steam Locomotives

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AT&SF 3750 Class 4-8-4, SS 3rd, New, FP, Oil Tender, Lights, No. 3751, Korean	\$1195
B&O C16 0-4-0T Dockside, SS 3rd, New, FP, Can Motor, Lights, Road No. 97	\$595
B&O P7D 4-6-2 Cincinnati, SS 3rd, Mint, FP, Can Motor, Lights, 1 of 25, No. 5301	\$1895
B&O P7E 4-6-2 Pacific Destreamlined, SS 3rd, Mint, FP Blue, Boxpox Drivers, No. 5314	\$1495
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CB&Q 54a 4-6-4, PSC #17159-2, New, FP, Can Motor, LED HL, Road No. 4003, Korea	\$2895
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MILW A5 Hiawatha, Weaver, New, FP, Upgraded, Can Motor, LEDs, Road No. 1	\$925
MILW F6a 4-6-4, Custom/Frank Miller, New, Pro Paint, Can Motor, No. 146, Exceptional	\$5595
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N&W S1a 0-8-0, PSC, Cat No. 15699, L/N, CP, Weathered, Road No. 224, Korea	\$1575
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SP MT-4 4-8-2, SS 3rd, New, FP, Postwar, Can Motor, Lights, Road No. 4360, Korea	\$1195
SP Lines S-Class 0-6-0, GPM, New, FP, Green Boiler, #1270.1, No. 1270, Boo Rim	\$2750
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UP Big Boy 4-8-8-4 Early, USH, L/N, CP, C&LS Gearboxes, Twin Cans, LEDs, No. 4006, KTM	\$1995
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EMD SW1 600 HP Phase II, Proto48, ORI, New, UP, Can Motor, Samhongsang, Korea	\$895
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NH ALCO PA A Unit, SS 3rd, Mint, FP, Early Green Scheme, DC/DCC Sound, Can Motor, Lights	\$725
NYC EMD E7 A-B Units, OMI, EX, CP, Black Lightning Stripe, H. Cox Drives, Nos. 2875-4002	\$1275
NYC E8a, OMI, L/N, CP, Gray Lightning Stripe, Silver Trucks, Cockerham Drive, No. 4095	\$1095
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NP EMC FT A-B Units, OMI, L/N, CP, Black, Can Motors, Fly Wheels, Nos. 6002C-6002D, Ajin	\$1395
PRR Centipede A-A Set, MTH, L/N, FP, Brunswick SS, 2 Rail, Item No. 20-2200-2, No. 5823	\$695
PRR EMD E8 A-A Units, SS 3rd, Mint, FP, Tuscan Five Stripe, Both Powered, DC/DCC Sound	\$1495
SP EMD SW-1500, OMI, New, UP, Flexicoil Trucks, Full Railing, Ajin	\$895
UP GE Dash 8-40CW, OMI, Cat. No. 0452, L/N, Pro Paint, Wide Cab, DCC/Sound, No. 9357	\$1595
Amtrak AEM-7 Electric, Atlas, L/N, FP, Silver/Blue/Red Scheme, Can Motor, No. 908	\$325
NYC T3a Electric, SS 3rd, New, FP, Black, DC, Can Motor, Lights, Road No. 278	\$825
PRR GG1, Kohs, New, FP, Brunswick Five Stripe/Claresdon, Drop Couplers, No.6873	\$5395
PRR GG1, Kohs, New, FP, Brunswick Five Stripe/Futura, Fixed Couplers, Road No. 4801	\$5395
PRR GG-1, CB, L/N, CP, Tuscan 5 Stripe, Wolfer Drive, Can Motors, LEDs, Road No. 4912	\$825
PRR GG-1 "Old Rivets", SS 3rd, EX, FP, Loewy Scheme, Can Motor, Road No. 4800, Korea	\$725
PRR P5a Box Cab Electric, OMI, Catalog No. 0209, New, UP, Can Motor, Ajin, Korea	\$850
PRR P5a Box Cab Electric, SS 3rd, Mint, FP, Can Motor, Road No. 4746	\$795

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MILW 1925 Hiawatha 5 Car Pass. Set, WVR, New, FP, Ribbed Side, Lights	\$850
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Reading Crusader 5-car Streamlined Set, Weaver, L/N, FP Stainless	\$895
AT&SF HWT Diner, PRB, Cat No. 4816P, New, FP, Coach Green, Road No. 1404	\$595
GN HWT Empire Builder Diner, PSC, New, FP, Interior, "Washington"	\$950
PRR Horse Express Car, SS, Mint, UP, 6-wheel trucks, KMT Japan	\$325
PRR Theatrical Scenery Car, SS, Mint, UP, 6-wheel trucks, KMT Japan	\$325
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UP LWT Café Lounge, Wasatch, New, UP, 6-wheel Trucks, Road Nos. 5000-5006, Korea	\$995
C&O Steel Caboose, OMI, L/N, CP, Road No. 90060	\$325
DL&W Steel Caboose, Steam Era, WVR, New, FP, Brass Construction, Road No. 889	\$375
N&W CF Wood Caboose, Kohs, Ver 1, New, FP, "8", Era 10/40 - 12/47, Road No. 518100	\$850
N&W C2 Steel Caboose, Kohs, Ver 1, New, FP, "AND", Era 9/49 - 1/64, Road No. 518438	\$850
N&W C2 Steel Caboose, Kohs, Ver 2, New, FP, "AND", Red, Era 1/64 - 12/66, No. 518440	\$725
PRR N5 Cabin Car, Kohs, Version 4, L/N, FP, "Buy War Bonds", Road No. 477418	\$675
UP CA-11 B-W Caboose, OMI, L/N, Pro Paint, Weathered, Full Interior, No. 25878	\$395
WM Steel Caboose, C&LS, L/N, FP, Steam Era, Full Interior, Road No. 1905	\$550
ACL Class O-17 Ventilated Box Car, RYM, New, FP, "Watermelon Car", Road No. 18521	\$450
ATSF Gunderson Double Stack 5 Container Car Set, PRB, New, FP, Red w/Containers	\$1195
PRR GLe Cement Hopper, Kohs, Ver. 3P, New, FP, FC Red, Circle Keystone, No. 253251	\$725
PRR GLe Cement Hopper, Kohs, Ver. 3S, New, FP, Gray Placard, Road No. 518132	\$725
PRR H25 Quad Hopper, KMW, KMW CP, Circle Keystone, S Series, AB Bks, No. 169845	\$495
NYC USRA Steel Container Gondola, RYM, L/N, CP by RYM, 6 Bulk Containers, No. 501211	\$525
PRR FM Container Car (5 containers), Car Works, L/N, CP, Road No. 473409	\$425
PRR FM Flat Car, Car Works, L/N, CP, Road No. 473567	\$350
PRR "Queen Mary" Depressed Center Flat Car, Kohs, Ver 1, New, FP, Westinghouse Load	\$1995
Virginian G4c "Battleship" Gondola, RYM, L/N, FP, Black, Road No. 20211	\$375
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Layout Tours
Evening Discussion Meetings

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★ Show: 9 am - 5 pm ★
Model Contest, Clinics
Layout Tours

SUNDAY

★ Show: 8:30 am - 2 pm ★
Layout Tours



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Registration (1 or 2 days) \$30.00 \$ 30.00
(Table holders also need to pay the \$30.00 registration fee)

of 6 ft. tables ____ @ \$60 ea/ \$70 after 3/1/2025 = \$ _____

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**No trading Friday Night.
Access to hall for setup purposes only.



Questions? Visit **MARCHMEET.NET**, call 414-629-0030 or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MarchOScaleMeet/>

The parties whose names appear above, have agreed to hold harmless all of the organizers, the sponsors, Pioneer Limited LLC, the Westin Lombard Yorktown Center, and others, singly and collectively, for any injury, harm, loss, damage, misadventure, or inconvenience suffered or sustained as a result of participating in this March O Scale Meet 2025, or in connection with any activity related to this event, whether of negligence by agents under their employ or otherwise.

7/18/24

From the Publisher's Desk

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

Well, it's time for the "Big Show" again here in the Chicago area. The March Meet seems to be going great with all tables sold; however, if you are still hoping to have a table, you can get on a wait list here: ChicagoMeet@yahoo.com.

This year promises to be bigger than ever. Check out our "March O Scale Meet What You Need to Know" article in this issue.

For the first time, Amy and I went to the Prototype Rails show in Cocoa Beach, Florida. I was surprised at the number of O scalers there were at the show. See the article in this issue.

Is a model layout ever really finished? We all know the answer to that, but what I just decided to do is, even though it's not complete, was to go back and fix a mistake from 10 years ago. The main yards on my layout were stub ended. Fine for car storage, but not for operations. As I get more scenery and the last industrial area completed, it was time to tear out those tracks and modify the yards. On the left is main one and two. Then an arriving / departing track for the yards. The four long stub ends made it a pain to build and rearrange trains.

A quick order to Jay Criswell at Right-O'-Way brought me frogs and guard rails, and I began building the new turnouts I needed.

Work began tearing out the ballast and track, trying to salvage what I could.





Of course, not everyone was happy about the extra work, but then again, my track foreman, Odell Leadbedder, is never happy.

After a few missteps, the job was finished and I moved on to another issue that's been bugging me for the past year.

If you want to see any of this and other kerfuffles here on the Richmond, Danville & Southern, please drop in at our open house in connection with the March Meet. [Click here for all the layout tours for the 20205 show.](#)

Happy Reading & Happy Modeling,

Amy & Dan Dawdry



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with
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2025 March O Scale Meet

What You Need to Know



The 2025 March Meet is just a few weeks away. If you have not signed up yet, you may do so on-line here: <https://marchmeet.net/WP/index.php/product/registration-2025/>

Hotel information is here: <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1714587452599&key=GRP&guestreslink2=true>

Layout Tours are here: <https://marchmeet.net/WP/index.php/layout-tours-2/>

Information on the contest is here: <https://marchmeet.net/WP/index.php/model-contest/> Please download and fill out the paperwork before the show if possible. That way you will be sure to have time to write down everything you want the judges to know about your model. We will also have a display area for models you want to bring to show but not be judged.

If you are going to Ted Schnepf's for the Thursday operation session you must Email Ted here: railsunlimited2@gmail.com. Reservations are required for operating session, but not for the Open House Saturday.

For all other information please see their Website here: <https://marchmeet.net/WP/>

Just a reminder, we've added something new to our Saturday evening Happy Hour / Social. We are inviting you to bring your models... latest and greatest, especially if you need more information on an existing model or would welcome guidance to resolve a model problem. We suggest that attendees bring their own "Something to Talk About" or "STA" items.



NEWS YOU CAN USE



[Sylvan Scale Models](#) continues to add to their O scale truck line up. Announcing their latest version of the 1937 Studebaker COE tractor and Edwards trailer. These were released at the Springfield, MA show last January with the Kraft decals.



The trailer is kit # OT-024-1 \$52.95 w/Kraft decals (Includes decals for tractor). Tractor is Kit # OV-365 (decals are included with trailer) \$52.95.

[See their Website for more information.](#)

These decals include L.C.L. company name and herald, numbers, and capacity data specific to these containers.

[Click here for more information in this set.](#)



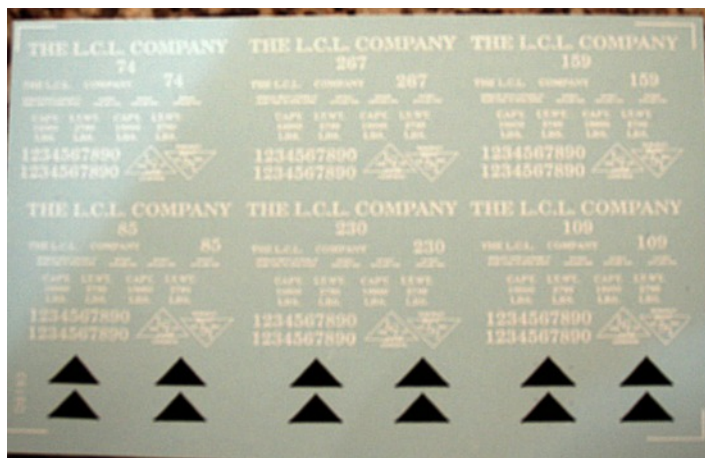
[Erik Earnest from Earnest Trains](#) has a new product in O scale and plans more.

O Scale EMD 645 - 710 Engine Kit - 16cyl EMD 645/710 Prime mover engine kit comes with Crank, rods, cylinders and pistons and valve covers great for details for shops yards and loads! To Finish they need a light sanding on the bottom to finish to your needs and paint.



William Mosteller from [Great Model Railroad Decals](#) has a new product. Container decals. New York Central (NYC) invented these containers in 1920, Baltimore & Ohio (B&O), Lehigh Valley (LV), Pennsylvania (Pennsy, PRR), and Reading all had cars to carry them. Their use continued into the 1960s. The decals were produced by Rail Graphics for Westerfield. Each set does up to six cars.

Good for junk yards too. [Check their Website for more details.](#)



[Model Tech Studios LLC](#) are featuring their "Your Towns Working Class Citizens" figures. These include: Soda Pop Delivery Worker with Soda Case in hand, Coal Worker, Lugging Coal Sack on back, The Milkman with Milk Bottles, The Soda Jerk, The Post Man with Satchel and Packages and many more.



See their Website for more!

- Operating ProtoSmoke Diesel Exhaust
- Onboard DCC/DCS Decode
- Proto-Scale 3-2 3-Rail/2-Rail Conversion Capable
- 1:48 Scale Proportions
- And more



Shown are just a few of the paint schemes available. All are ready for preorder now.

Want to download a PDF of the Atlas O Winter 2025 Premier Catalog to peruse or to print? [Click here!](#)



Atlas has a new Atlas O Premier U30C Locomotive.



Rod Miller wanted to let everyone know that he has an updated Website. It's a menu-based navigation and in the process added quite a bit of information that people might find of interest.

<http://www.rodmillar.com/>



These feature the following:

- Intricately Detailed, Durable ABS Body
- Die-Cast Truck Sides, Pilots and Fuel Tank
- Metal Chassis
- Metal Handrails and Horn
- Metal Body Side Grilles
- Detachable Snow Plow
- Authentic Paint Scheme
- Metal Wheels, Axles and Gears
- O Scale Kadee-Compatible Coupler Mounting Pads
- Prototypical Rule 17 Lighting
- Lighted LED Cab Interior Light
- Illuminated LED Number Boards
- Lighted LED Marker Lights

Frenchman River Model Works has a new model in their "Thomas Yorke Kits" line.

The Grain Unloader and Storage Silo kits. Ever wonder why your covered hoppers run around your railroad with no place to go? Well, we've changed that! This Bulk Unloader with accompanying Silos (sold separately) is the answer.

This system can be used in conjunction with an on-site industry, or if your pike doesn't have the room for a large industrial complex, use this system as an off-site facility. Hoppers are unloaded and material stored in the silos for pick-up by truck and taken to

the plant. Many industries used such systems including feed, sand, chemicals etc.



[See their Website for these and so much more.](#)



Coming from the [Berkshire Car Shop](#): Lehigh Valley Transit 800 series interurbans.

The Lehigh Valley Transit received two deliveries of these classic Jewett Car Company arch-window interurbans.



With body modifications and car differences, about 8 different car configurations occurred over the life of the cars.



The cars operated in multiple car consists, and they had different color schemes.

After the cars were not used in passenger service, a few of the cars were converted to freight motors where they operated in combinations up to 3 cars.



Shown are one model of the body variations for the passenger and freight motor bodies. Each car will include a 3D printed one-piece body, roof and floor.

Additional details like partitions, seats and other details are being developed. Decals for the different lettering schemes will also be developed.

[See their Website for more information.](#)

New from [Rusty Rail](#) is the next work car that is a tool car in ON30 scale. You see the small tank in the back and the tool house. Also has a small fence that holds a dented 55 gallon drum and a smaller steel drum. The tank contains a 3D printed valve. The flat car is included and has boosters to allow clearance on those tight turns. I will provide wire for the braking wheel and wire for the grab irons. I will include the San Juan detail parts (former Grandt line), 2 stirrups and a brake wheel setup. 2 Kadee coupler boxes are included ,but you supply the Kadee couplers and the trucks you want. The tool car is 4" long and 1 1/2" wide. All resin castings and comes unpainted.



[See their Website for more items.](#)

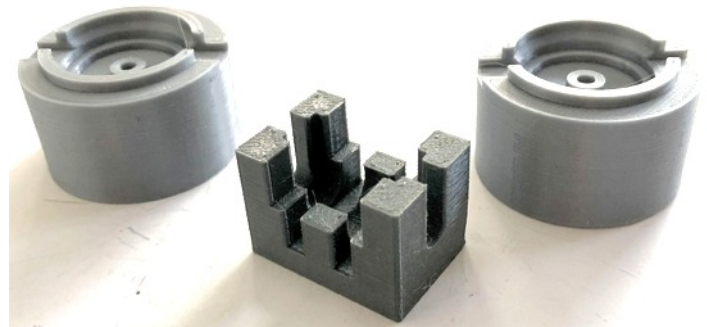


News from All Nation Line: Continue to celebrate the "5" in 2025 at All Nation Line and 5 years in business with John Wubbel. In March and April Boxcar Kits will be 5% off when ordering from our site! Be sure to check out these great deals! A gift from All Nation Line to you!

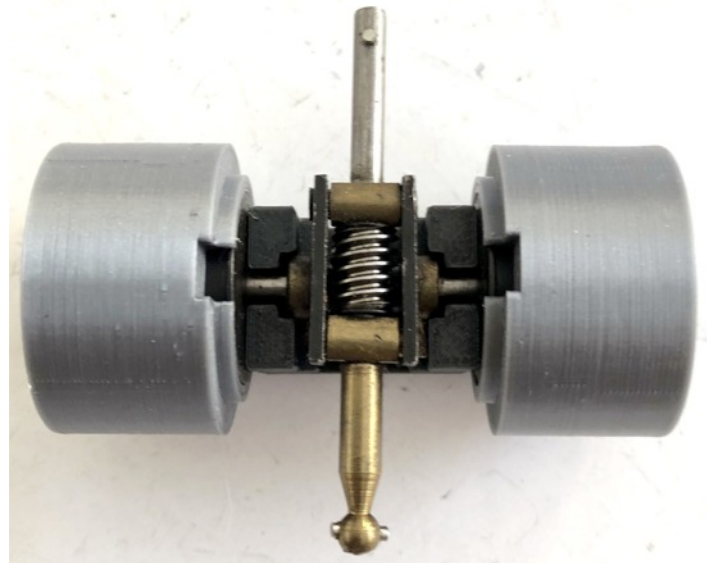
https://allnationline.com/WP/?product_cat=kits

All Nation Line Wheel Press Tool: Wheel press tools have come a long way in the last few years. Pressing on wheels can be a bit of a challenge not only for the beginner but also for some of our most advanced modelers. Wheel press tools for the various configurations can be pricey. The initial goal in

creating the 3D printed wheel presses was to provide a simple and affordable way to complete this task. All Nation has two new wheel press offerings. The spacer accommodates either the All Nation Line or the P&D geared axle.



[All Nation Standard Transmission With Geared Axle PN#575AN](#)

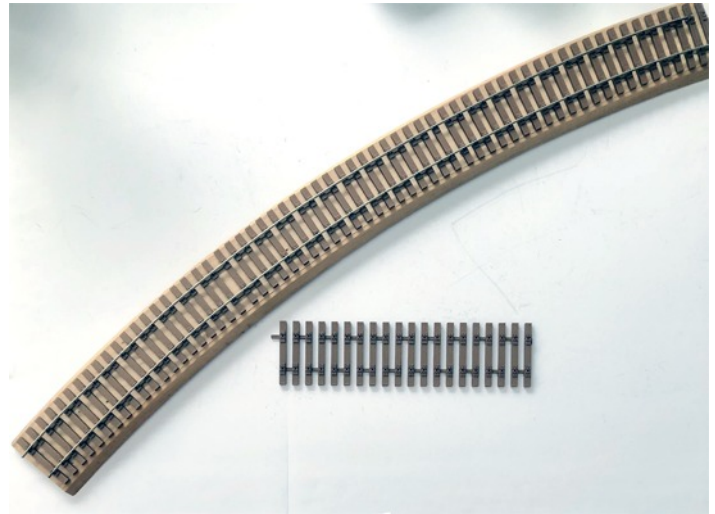
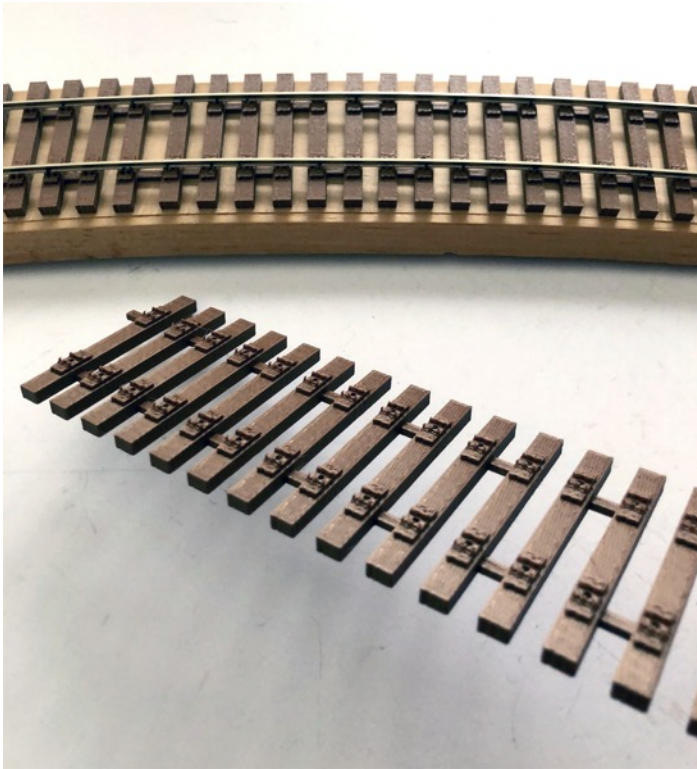


[Wheel Press with Spacer For P&D Standard Transmission With Geared Axle PN#576AN](#)

Flex Track Ties At All Nation Line

All Nation Line now carries many options for modelers wanting to lay down Flex Ties quickly. Designed to increase the fun and to take some of the challenges out from doing hand laid track construction on the layout. The cost is greatly reduced from a traditional nickel silver track at \$10 to \$12 per foot, this product comes in at around \$4.00 per foot. The savings are significant allowing for acquiring some of the higher end turnouts available on the market to go with our track.

3D Printed in any color (brown is our default for wood and gray for concrete ties) with PLA filament, we can also print track for back porch or outdoor garden railroads in ABS, ABS+ or PETG via special order request. This track can be glued or nailed down with pins or spikes. Holes are in the tie plates for easy spiking into the roadbed.



[Check out all the details For Tracks at All Nation Line!](#)



[Our friends at Berkshire Valley Models](#) have a few items on interest this month.

301 Horse & Rider #1.



Multiple Flex Track Options include:

- All Nation P48 Flex Ties Simulated Wood With Tie Plates For Code 100 3D Printed PN#582AN
- All Nation P48 Flex Ties Simulated Wood No Tie Plates For Code 100 3D Printed PN#584AN
- All Nation P48 Flex Ties Simulated Wood No Tie Plates For Code 125 3D Printed PN#583AN
- All Nation P48 Flex Ties Simulated Wood With Tie Plates For Code 125 3D Printed PN#585AN
- All Nation OW5 Flex Ties Simulated Wood NO Tie Plates For Code 100 3D Printed PN#581AN
- All Nation OW5 Flex Ties Simulated Wood With Tie Plates For Code 100 3D Printed PN#580AN
- All Nation On3 Flex Track With Spike Holes For Code 100 3D Printed PN#578AN
- All Nation Concrete Ties Dead Rail Flex Track for Power on Board Engines Code 148 3D Printed PN#532AN
- All Nation Concrete Ties With Plates – Flex Track With Code 148 Rail (One 36" Section) PN#529AN
- All Nation Concrete Ties With Plates – Flex Track For Code 148 (4 Sections, 10" Each) PN#526AN

The horse and rider are made of unpainted white metal parts. Assembly required.

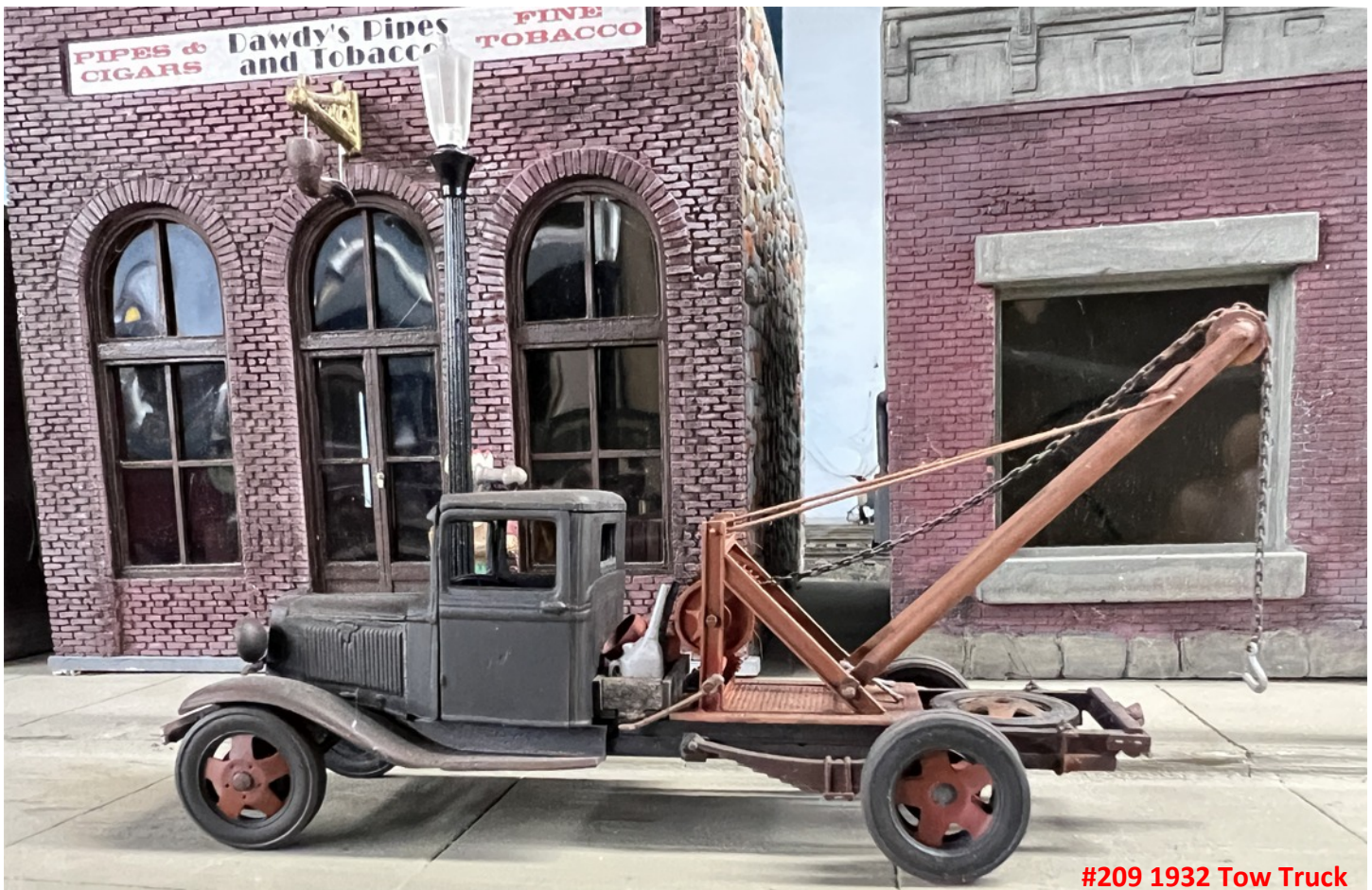


#301 Horse & Rider #2. The horse and rider are made of unpainted white metal parts. Assembly required.

[Berkshire Valley Models](#) is also advertising their Tow Truck this month in our magazine so I thought I would add my version that I built a few years ago. See picture below.

I also wrote an article on building these trucks which you can find in the [January/February 2022 issue](#) [here](#).

These are great kits and proper scale. They have a whole line of different trucks. [Check their Website for more!](#)



#209 1932 Tow Truck

In the last issue, Glen Guerra wrote about the [Lake States Railway Historical Association](#) and their fantastic archives.



Lake States will be having their Railroad History Symposium Saturday, April 12, 2025 at the Al. Ringling Theater, 136 4th Avenue, Baraboo, Wisconsin 53913.

Join them for the annual social gathering and history presentation event where like-minded individuals can share experiences, learn new history, and enjoy excellent visual programming of railroading-related subjects and great food. Event includes a catered box lunch, door prizes, and access to the "Company store," a fund raiser featuring books, magazines, and other surplus items from Lake States archives.



Scheduled speakers include:

- Chris Burger: The Chicago & North Eastern
- Kevin P. Keefe: The Career of Railroad Artist Gil Reid
- James Lewnard: The Harvard Subdivision
- Scott Lothes: The Spectacular Burlington Steam Program
- Jerry Pyfer: We Didn't Always Haul Freight
- Steve Sandberg: What's Happening at Silvis?
- Mike Schafer: My Goofy Career
- Mike Yuhas: The Basics of Drone Photography

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Cabin Creek Coal Tipple

This is a freelanced tipple representing one where the mine is further up the hill. This tipple services three tracks. The power house and a small storage shed are included.

#14105 O Scale \$ 689.95

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Mill Creek Coal & Coke Tipple No. 2

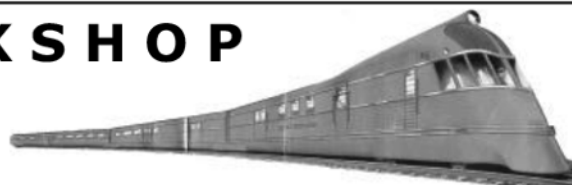
Tipple No. 2 is a freelanced composite of several different tipples located in West Virginia. The design has two tracks serviced under the tipple. There is room for a stub track if desired under the fixed chute on the back. Two narrow gauge (30") mine cars are included.

#17240 O Scale \$ 669.95

#17241 On30 Mine Cars, 3 pk \$ 39.95

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COCOA BEACH PROTOTYPE RAILS 2025



By Dan Dawdy Photos by Dan Dawdy unless noted

After many years of wanting to go to this show, Amy and I finally made the trip. We stayed with Glenn Guerra and Rose Quintero in St. Augustine, Florida. We drove down Friday for the show and hung around through Saturday. If you have never been to a Prototype Modelers Meet, it's all about the clinics. The room is mostly empty with just dealers until the clinics are over, and then the herd comes through until the next clinic and so on. Below is just the Friday clinics that were available.

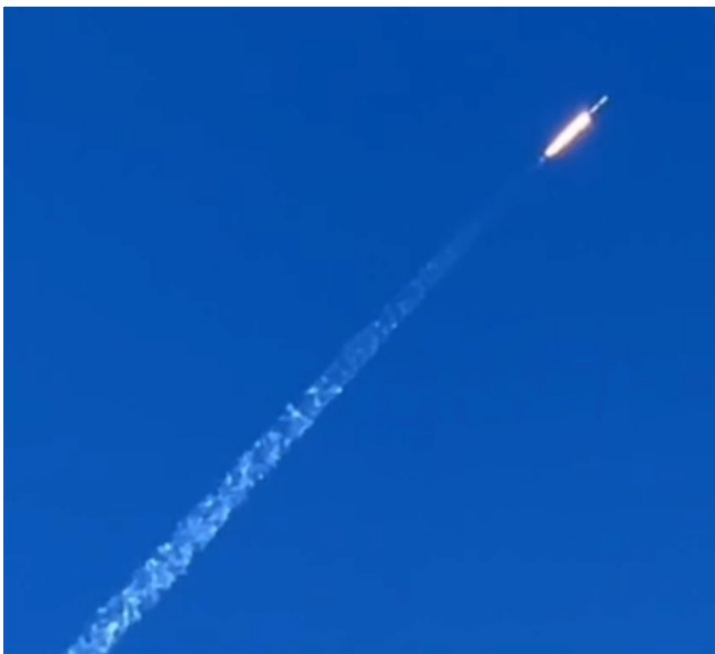
Prototype Rails 2025

Rev 06	Ballroom	Across from the Ballroom		Across from the Restaurant			
		Sand Castle 1	Sand Castle 2	Seahorse	Starfish	Sand Dollar+Sundial	Horizons
Thu 1/9/25 7:00 PM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	Room Not Available	Barry: Unusual Research Sources	Boland: 100 years of LIRR Switchers	C. Priest: Order up! Gons, Please, w/ a Side of Waffles	Murrie: WWII Hospital Trains 1: Equipment
Thu 1/9/25 8:30 PM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	Room Not Available	Webber: Researching Railway Equipment	Harper: The Alma Branch - Moving Toward Completion	S. Priest: So You Want to Build a Model Railroad?	Murrie: WWII Hospital Trains 2: Operations
11PM - 9AM: Closed		SLEEP		SLEEP	SLEEP	SLEEP	SLEEP
	Ballroom	Across from the Ballroom		Across from the Restaurant			
		Sand Castle 1	Sand Castle 2	Seahorse	Starfish	Sand Dollar+Sundial	Horizons
Fri 1/10/25 9:00 AM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	A. Brown: Traffic Patterns from Conductor's Trainbooks	Bogatiuk: Blunami Decoders - What's the Big Deal?!	Cauthen: SP Passenger Cars: Sleepers & Baggage Dorms	Switzer: Modeling the Freight Cars of Muncie, IN	Spilman: 1970's Freight Car Stenciling
Fri 1/10/25 10:30 AM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	Amfahr: Advanced TT&TO for Layout Owners & Dispatchers	Vaughn: How and Why to Model the Nickel Plate Road	Eichelberger: Pullman Lines to FL from the Midwest and NYC	Culotta: Creating & Working with Etched Metal Details	Panza: The Ups and Downs of Railbox
Fri 1/10/25 12:00 PM	12PM - 1PM: Closed		LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
Fri 1/10/25 1:00 PM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	Thompson: Creating Realistic Operation on a Small Layout	B. Smith: Building 3D-Printed Vehicle Kits	Langston: C&O and B&O Passenger Cars in FL	Koester: Modeling a Wabash Mogul Branch in P-48	Thomas: Evolution of the Autorack
Fri 1/10/25 2:30 PM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	Bell: Locomotives of the White Pass & Yukon	Sissons: Scratch Building NS Coal Hoppers	L. Smith: Manufacturing Realistic Classic Passenger Trains	Tagsold: C&S Layout	S. Priest: Getting High: The 20-2 Autorack Fleet
Fri 1/10/25 4:00 PM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	Hinman: NYC Freight Cars 7: 40' 10'0" IH Boxcars	Deak: Laser-Cutting & 3D-Printing Layout Accessories	Remiarz: GN freight cars of the 50's - Part 1: 40' Boxcars	Schneider: Old Woman + New Basement = layout update	Strenecky: Brightline Florida and Brightline West
Fri 1/10/25 5:30 PM	5:30PM - 7PM: Closed		DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER
Fri 1/10/25 7:00 PM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	Leider: Weed Control on the Railroads	Wilson: Super detailing the Walthers Coke facility	Boland: 100 years of LIRR Switchers	J. Brown: A Tour of Chicago in 1983	S. Priest: So You Want to Build a Model Railroad?
Fri 1/10/25 8:30 PM	Displays, Vendors, Modular Layouts	Room Not Available	Wells: Modeling Southern Rwy Transition Era Boxcars	Carlson: The C&I Coal Fleet	Langston: Slumbercoach, Sleepercoach - What's in a Name?	Thomas: Modeling Considerations for the 1960's Modeler	Panza: Early Years of TTX
11PM - 9AM: Closed		SLEEP		SLEEP	SLEEP	SLEEP	SLEEP

O scale was well represented within the show this year. We shared a table with Glenn as he had some of his many projects, as well information about the [Lake States Railway Historical Association](#). (See article here in our last issue.) What follows are observation and photos of this year's show.



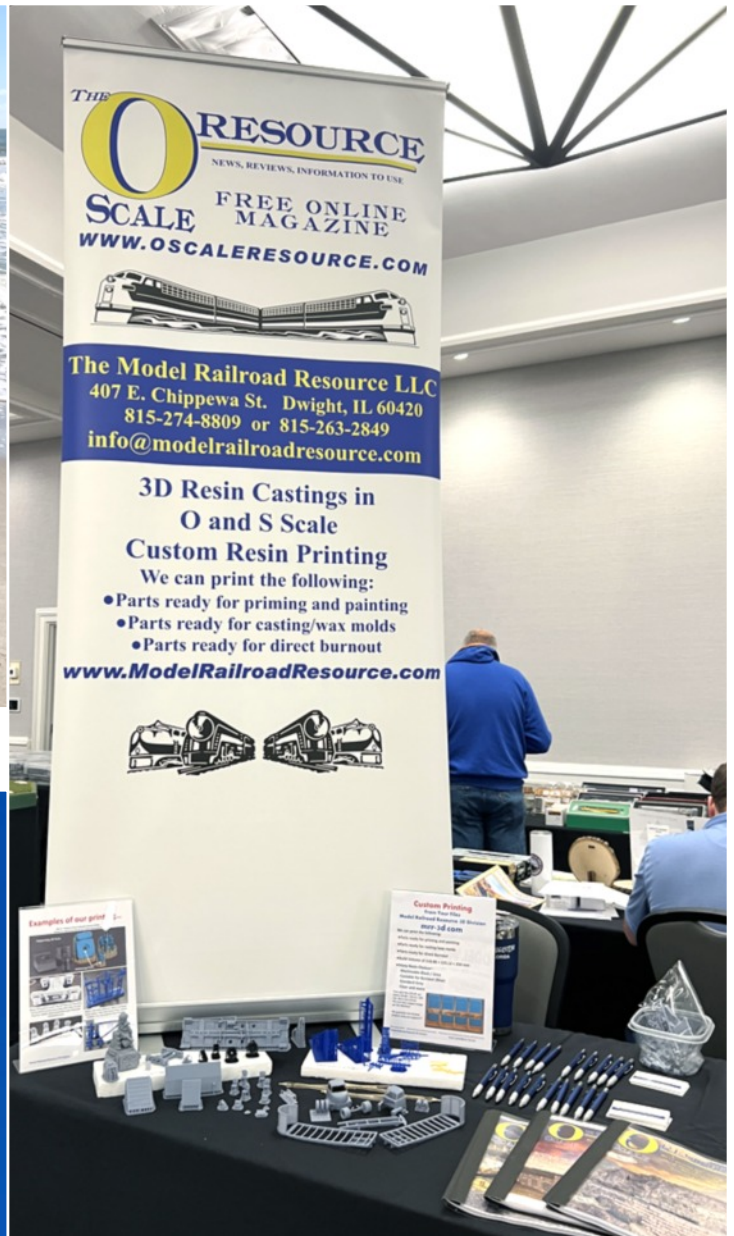
Coming from a very cold, 10 degree Illinois, to the 58 degree beach was nice.



We even got to see a SpaceX Starlink launch!



One of Glenn Guerra's Mullet River cabooses on display.



Set up and ready to show!

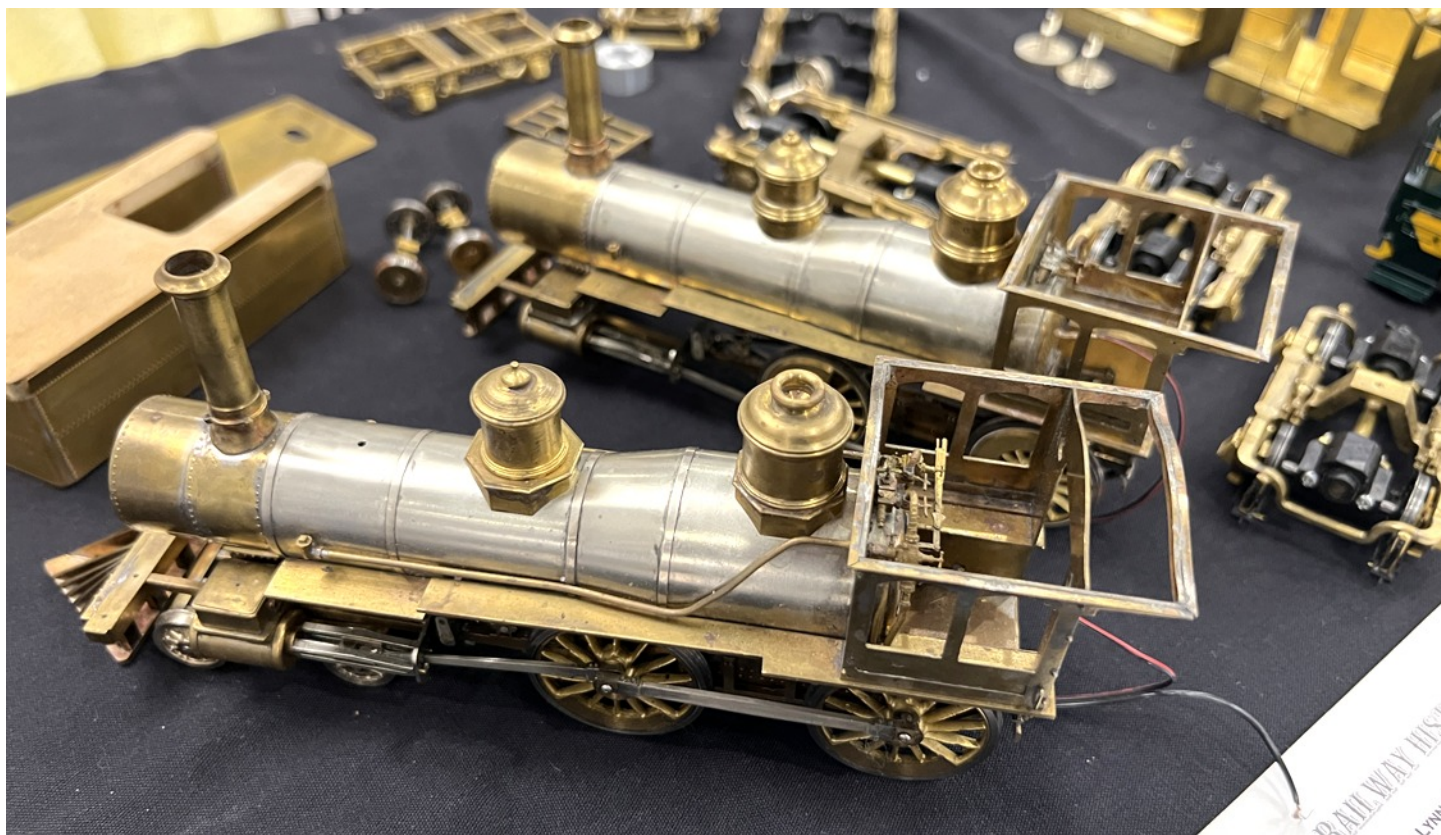


John Cagle (l) and Glenn Guerra talk shop.



Above: More of Glenn Guerra's models. The early boxcars are all P48 and being built for his display layout.

Below: Glenn's scratch built P48 early CNW locomotives, And yes, he will continue his articles on this later this year. [Click here to see part one of this project.](#)

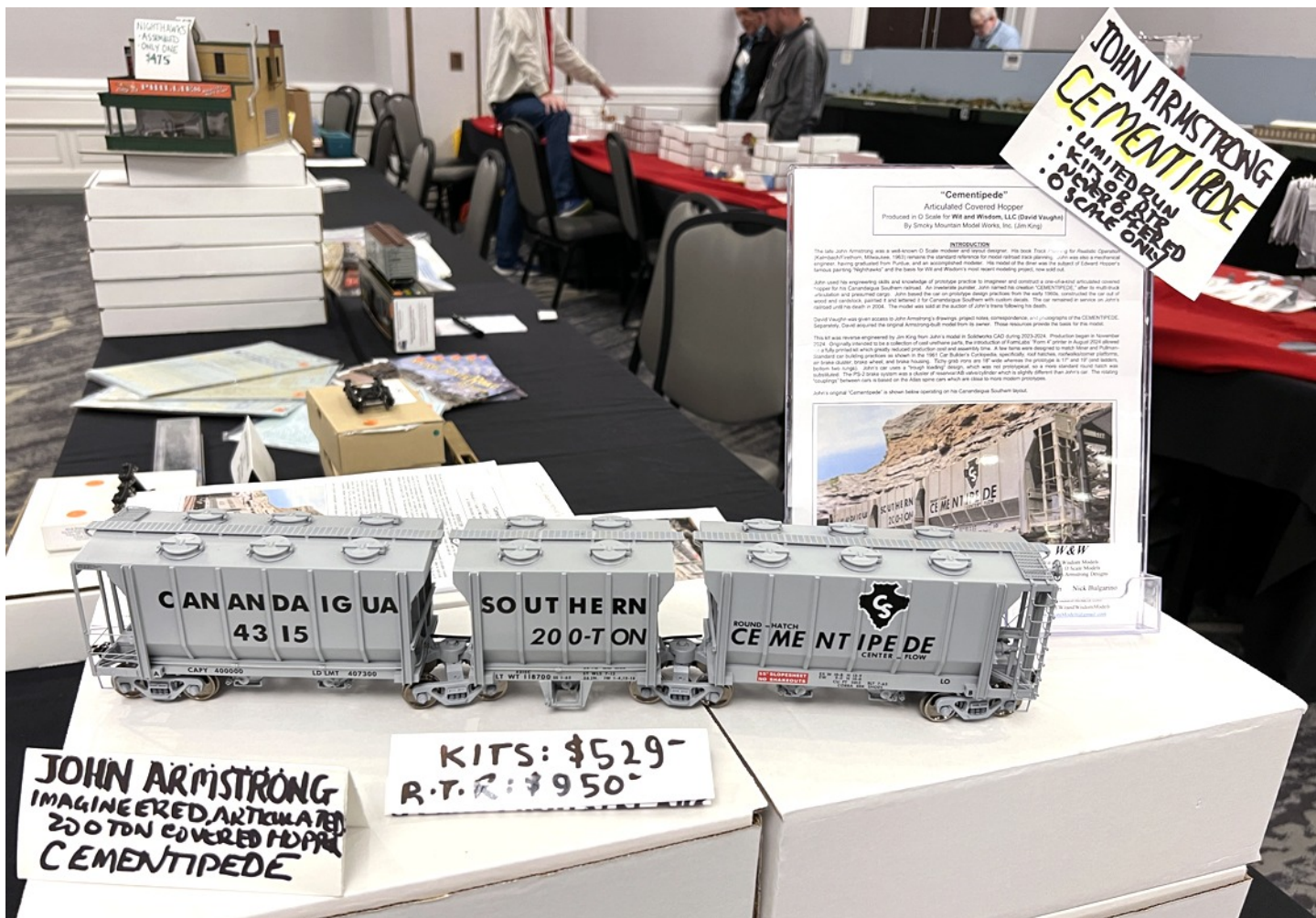




David Vaughn photo



David Vaughn photo



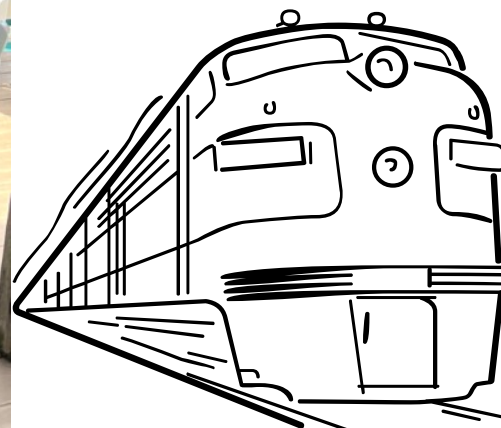
Presenting John Armstrong's "Cementipede". This kit, or ready to run, railcar is being produced by [Wit and Wisdom Models](#). See their ad in this issue [as well as our news item in the last issue here](#).



Renee Burney photo

The O scale crowd had lunch on Saturday at the hotel. From left to right:

David Wiggs, Marty Megregian, David Vaughn, Ken Burney, Walter Harlocher, John Cagle, Dan Dawdy, Amy Dawdy, Glenn Guerra, Rose Quintero and Ted Schnepf.







David Vaughn photo



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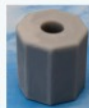
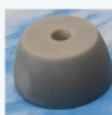
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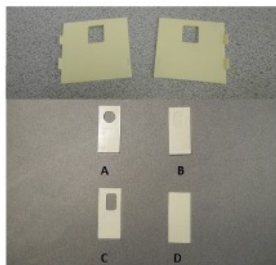
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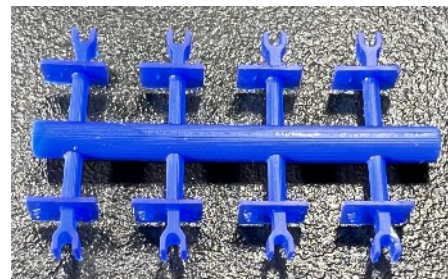
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A Fleet for Operations 2: Some Fixtures and an Easier Conversion

By Brian Scace

Before we begin, a word. If you are joining us for the first time here, [I invite you to go back to the last issue here and give it a read for an intro and some philosophy before continuing](#). It'll help you to understand what we are doing with this stuff, how far we are going, and why.

Before We Bash:

Any good construction article usually starts with a list of tools and materials required. We'll flout that convention and mention tools as we go along. However, I am going to introduce you to a couple fixtures that I find indispensable in maintaining a sizeable fleet of stock for a proto-ops or club environment.

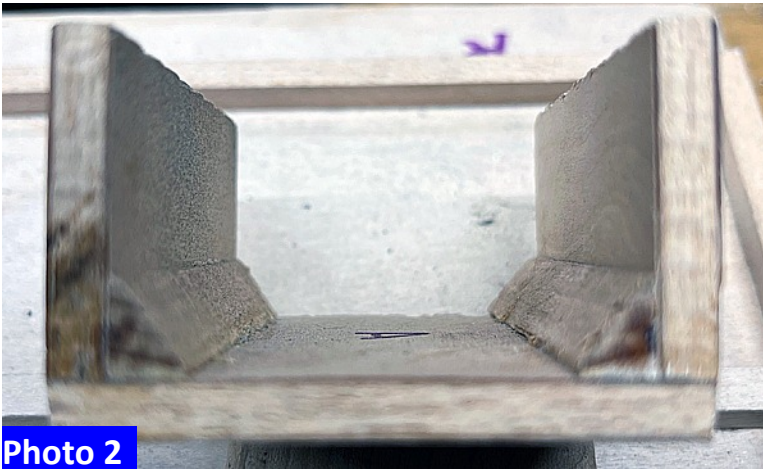
First up is this holding jig (**Photo 1**). It consists of two trays, one fitted up for matching flat blocks of various lengths and one for U-blocks. I started with a chunk of nice flat 1/4" ply as a base. Masonite will do nicely as well. 1/4" or 3/8" square strip defines the trays within which each set of blocks might be used; closer together for shorter pieces of stock and further apart for longer ones. The strip is glued on with PVA or your choice of wood glue.

Photo 1



BTW, I highly recommend becoming one with PVA whilst dealing with wood. For some reason, perhaps because of market domination in the US by the likes of Elmers, it isn't as well-known here as it is in the UK, but you can easily get a good one in the form of Weldbond, a Canadian brand available in the big craft-stores like Michaels. You'll like it, not only for wood but (oddly enough) for laminating sheets of styrene without the fear of the solvent in things like Plasticweld or even contact cements (Goo being the more notorious) outgassing through the lamination and bubbling the surfaces of the assembly. Something to keep in your bag of modeling tricks.

Back on track, you should really make your sets of flat blocks and your set of U-blocks first. By "set", I mean dimensionally matched pairs at a minimum. My flat blocks came from my wife's stamping/embossing hobby, lovely matched maple pairs, and another trip to the craft-store might be in order. Yours can also be easily knocked out on a table saw, but use nice clear woods and cut them to match. When you glue up your



strips to the base you can then place them tight enough to a pair of identical blocks so they (the blocks) slide within the resulting trays without wobbling about.

My U-block set is made with the same dimension-matching notion in mind, glued and clamped with PVA and gusseted with triangle strip (square-stock will do) so the sides are square and very solid (**Photo 2**).

Photo 3 shows how this is used, the U-blocks holding a tank car upside down to be worked on with no risk to the somewhat delicate railings

found atop the carbody. Other cars like flats and housecars can be supported on flat blocks, and you can cut special thicknesses or stack the blocks for locomotives and oddly shaped cars as needed. You'll find yourself making up special sets, like flat blocks with stripwood down the edges to support boxcars with or without roofwalks (**Photo 4**). Just keep the widths the same so you can flop them in and out as needed. It really makes working on the fleet much easier; easier on it and on me.



Photo 3



Photo 4

The second useful jig is a coupler-height testing fixture, simply a piece of straight 1x4 with a piece of flextrack nailed to it and a pair of height-gages screwed down on either end (**Photos 5 and 6 next page**).

You'll notice a gap in the ties toward one end with a hole drilled through the plank. There is a corresponding screw in the nearby leg of the benchwork to hang this thing on when not in use. Like many things, it is a very useful thing to have to hand when you need it and a bit of an annoyance when not actually in use (for the space it takes up) unless you plan for its storage.

I cannot stress enough the value of having at least a coupler-height gage, by the way. If you don't have one, buy one or make one.



Photo 5



Photo 6

You are really wasting your time trying to maintain a reliable fleet without one. Once you have one, use it. If it just lives in a drawer, you might as well not own it. A coupler-height gage is not a tool one collects.

Getting Our Toes Wet

Now, it's time for a pretty simple conversion, the 50' high-cube boxcar that MTH did, and not a bad model above the frame. We'll be using the Kadee 100-ton roller-bearing truck and 800-series Kadee couplers. A rather unknown product in the Kadee range is the #819 coupler box, a representation of the ends of a cushioned underframe and something we use quite often here.

Photo 7 shows this car on its back after stripping away the high-rail stuff. Sometimes these things are a bit mysterious in their disassembly; you must accept that there is nothing standardized about high-rail material,



Photo 7

even within one importer's range. Just breathe in, remember someone assembled it on an assembly line so it can't be too insane, and look for the signs of how it was done.

In this case, there are four deep holes within which lurk the longer screws which hold the body to the frame. Also, the lower door runners are tabbed through the bottom of the body and screwed to the frame. Remove the short screws that hold them, gently pry the runners free, out of the slots in the body, and set them and the doors aside.

Before lifting the frame out, it is always a good idea to paint, ink, or scratch a mark on the brake end of the frame so you put it back in proper orientation to the brakewheel-end of the carbody. I keep a permanent marker to hand for the purpose.

MTH like to screw their trucks on from the inside rather than follow convention and do so from outside, but no matter. Lift the frame, unscrew the trucks, and drop the frame back in place so we can assess what needs done. By the way, you now can appreciate why we built the holding fixture with two trays. While one is busy with the blocks holding the car, the other becomes a receptacle for smaller bits and screws, making re-assembly far more pleasant as you'll discover later.

On this car, there are a couple lugs for Kadees cast in and the tops are flush with the bottom of the end-sill of the carbody, just what we want. In these conversions, this bit of generosity is far from universal so appreciate the gift for what it is. Later on, we'll deal with having to create this situation for ourselves. You will notice after removing the frame again and flipping it over, however (**Photo 8**), the end-weights might interfere with the coupler screws, so let's remove the weights and deal with that during re-assembly.



Photo 8

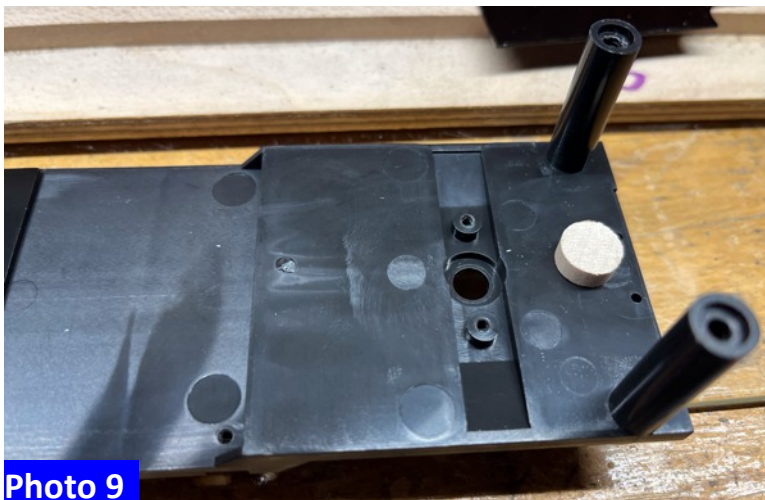


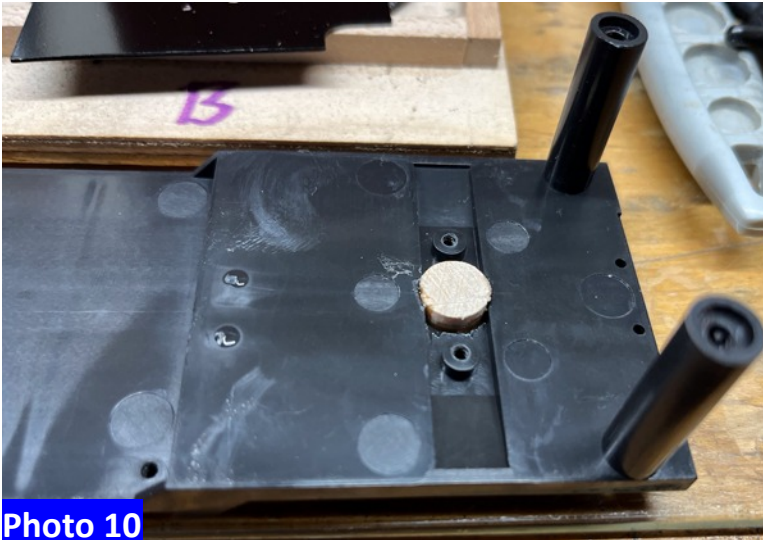
Photo 9

By the way, MTH supply thick coupler-box shims in a plastic bag chucked in the box, so there is an expectation of screwdriver-conversion to 2-rail needing them; not at all What Tiggers Like Best and illustrative of why we are doing what we are doing. We'll leave them in the bag where they belong.

We've lucked out on coupler mounting lugs, but the bolsters are another story, with great big holes and not a lot of meat in the casting to fill them (**Photo 9**). A mark on our side of the ledger though are the deep carbody sidesills that will

effectively hide the mischief we are about to commit, freeing us up to think more in the mechanical than the visual. What we do will be effectively hidden.

Salvation is often found in the wooden plugs shown in **Photo 9**, in this case some 7/16" hardwood dowel out of an assortment pack from the craftstore diced up to nominal 1/4" discs on a Dremel miniature table saw. An Xacto razor saw in a miniature miter-box easily does as well. Whatever you use, you want the flat bits flat and square.



Because there isn't much meat to work with, I left the shoulders in the hole, slathered the plug in epoxy, and dropped them in from the top to fill (Photo 10). Once dry, I drilled a #50 hole through and tapped the whole for a 2-56 bolster screw (Photo 11). Now, I know my fellow machinists will scream bloody murder, but one can quite successfully tap hardwood. If you prefer to follow convention, though, there is nothing that says you can't drill a #42 clearance hole instead and add a nut on top before re-assembly. The advantage of tapping, though, is you don't have to disassemble the car if you need to pull a truck off one day.

Now is a good time to mention that the Kadee truck relies on a delrin bush as the bolster pin and retainer, not a bolster screw. Whatever we do, then, can be assembled tightly and the truck will rotate freely rather than depend on the screw itself to be the bolster pin and require the screw to not tighten the truck yet not unscrew itself over time as the truck rotates.

While we're on about drills and taps, you'll be using these a lot as we go along, so get a full drill index of number-drills, another of miniature drills, an assortment of good 2-56 and 1-72 taps, a tap holder and a couple pin-vises. Spend the money on good ones from a machine-tool supplier if you possibly can. Remember, the quality of the tool is inversely proportional to the quantity of the blood. The sizes for tapping and clearance holes can be found on the Internet if you don't have a chart or handbook.

Anyway, drill and tap (2-56) those coupler-box lugs while you are at it, then give the tops of the lugs a whack with a nice flat-file to dress them up and ensure the boxes tighten down flat.

Now, we'll set the truck height. I flipped the underframe over and decided the bottom of the rather large hole would be best bridged with a piece of #149 (0.040" x 0.250") Evergreen styrene strip to give the forthcoming washer stack

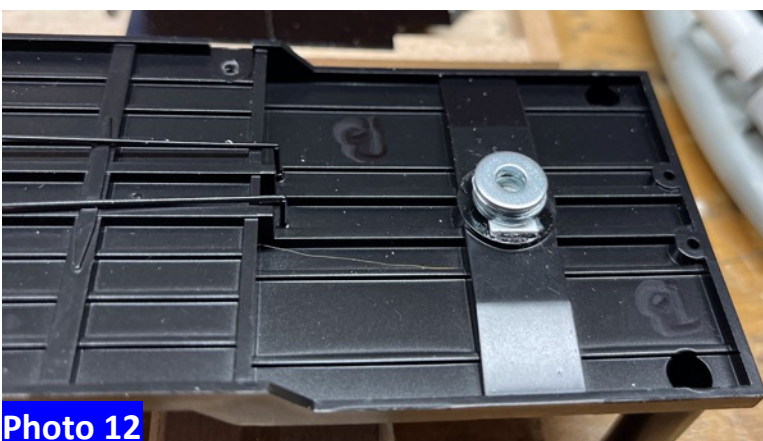
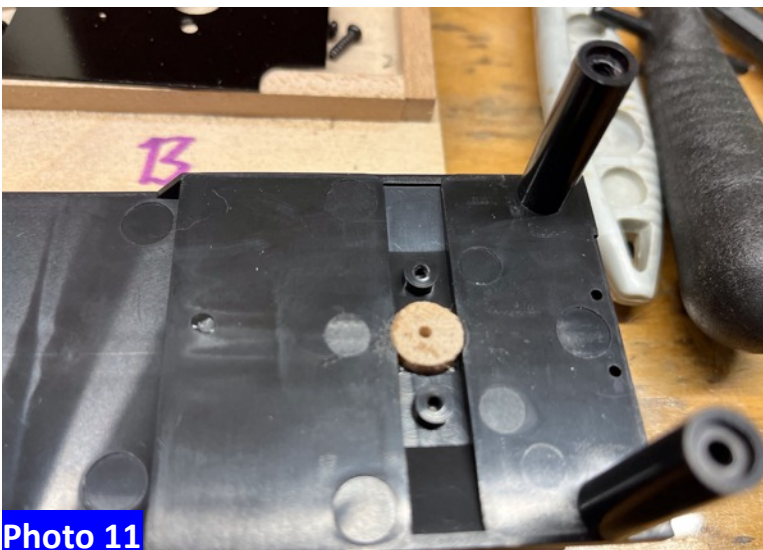




Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15

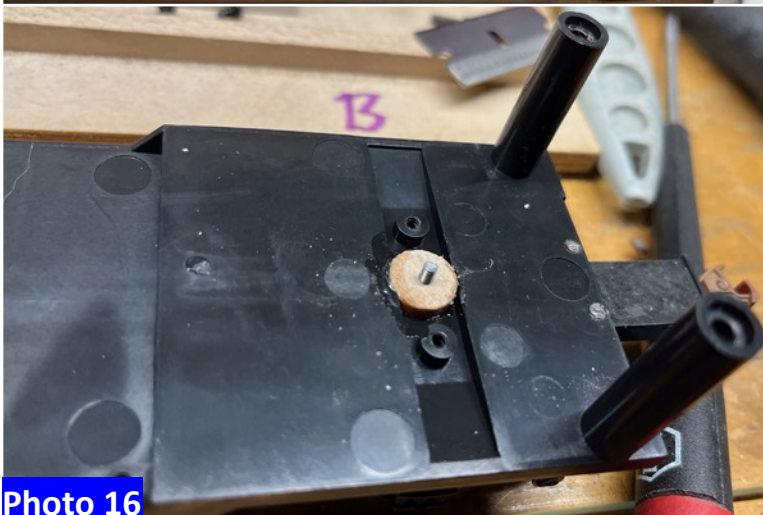


Photo 16

something square to bear upon. Drill a #42 clearance hole in the bridge to accommodate the screw. The truck height is then established by adding a few #6 washers (might as well lay in a supply of them and #8 if you are here for the long-haul). Three or four should do it nicely (Photo 12), atop which we add the truck and bolster lug, securing it all together with a nice long 2-56 machine screw. In Photo 13, we see how a coupler gage is used to measure the height of the mounting surface before installation of the couplers. Shift a washer in or out from the stack under the bolster lug until the ledge of the gage touches the mounting surface for the box.

Now that I know how many are required to establish proper truck height, I disassemble the lot and glue the stack together with watch-crystal cement, another adhesive I recommend you investigate. It is a strong flexible material that dries absolutely clear and does well with metals and plastics (Photo 14). Give your hobby shop a chance first, then go to the likes of Amazon. After gluing up the stack, assemble the trucks to the underframe and tighten it up nicely so as to clamp everything together to dry.

Add a support strip of 0.030" Evergreen styrene to the frame where the back of the box would otherwise dangle (Photo 15), then assemble the couplers into the box and screw it down to the lugs. Flip the frame over and either nip or grind the ends of the screws flush so they don't interfere with the weights when you re-install them (Photo 16).

Time for re-assembly. Re-install the end-weights (for stiffness of the underframe), then do a final check with your height-gage. All good? Then drop the frame back into the body, remembering you marked which end of the frame goes to the brakewheel, screw it down, then re-install the doors, slip in the lower runners, then discover you got cocky and a door is upside down. Take it back apart and, thusly humbled, flip it right-side up and put the runner in place again and screw it down (Photo 17 next page).

You might find the car a little wobbly. If so, take one truck off, only one, and sand or file a little off the narrow end of the bushing (Photo 18 next page). It won't take much of a shave for the bush



Photo 17



Photo 18

to hold the truck far tighter, so be gentle; only a couple swipes and test it out to get the wobble out. Only do the one truck and leave the other loose so the car will track without lifting wheels off.

There you have it (**Photo 19**). This car meets our metric of the boxes being up against the underside of the ends of the car, truck-height thereby established. The ride-height looks convincing as it should, and the deep side-sills hide the mischief we have committed underneath quite effectively.



Photo 19

Here is a different way of accomplishing the same thing with an eye on shallower side-sills that you can see under, by the way (**Photo 20 next page**). Instead of a simple washer stack, a piece of #256 3/16" Evergreen square tube is used after knocking the bolster lug off completely, flush to the floor ribbing.

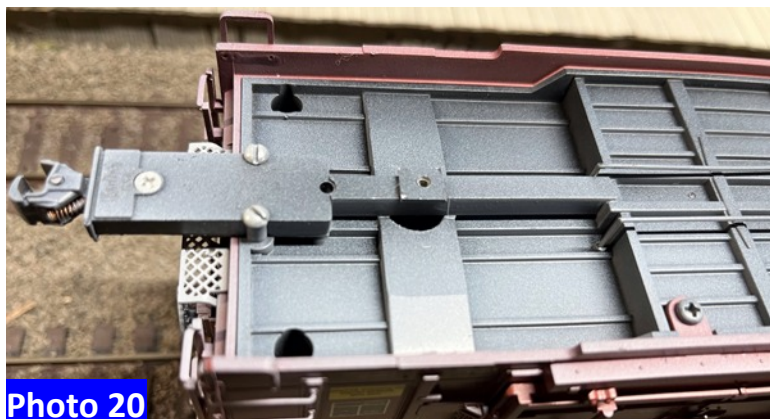


Photo 20

The tube serves to fill the big vacant space between where the mainframe is abbreviated for high-rail trucks and the back end of the coupler box. This effectively blocks the ability to see through under the car and over the trucks whilst visually faking a full frame to the draftgear box. Truck height is shimmed the same way except using styrene strip rather than washers, in this case a strip of 0.040 x 0.250" #149 Evergreen styrene cut long enough to provide a solid base against which the truck bush bears, the whole again drilled and tapped for a 2-56 screw.

From here (**Photo 21**), I'll leave the detailing of the car to suit as outside the scope of this series. I will mention that everything here is weathered with an eye to "blend" of the fleet under layout lighting. With the trucks and couplers where they are now supposed to be, and the fact that everything above the frame was already satisfactory for the purpose, the blended result needs no apology (**Photo 22**).

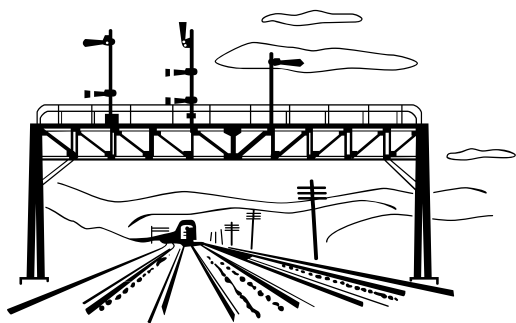
Next time, things get only a little more complicated, but nothing you can't handle now that you have this one under your belt.



Photo 21



Photo 22



FINISHING A PRB SANTA FE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAIR CAR PART 1

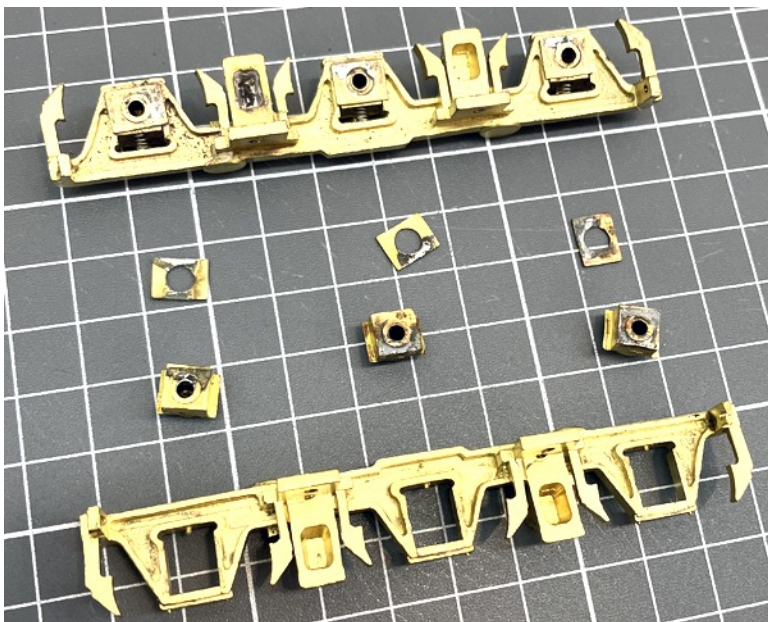
By: Santiago Pineda



*A spectacular PRB AT&SF heavyweight chair car sits on the rails.
These versatile Santa Fe prototypes were used on many secondary trains.*

Pecos River Brass imported the ultimate Santa Fe passenger cars, but completing one of their unpainted heavyweight car involves installing an interior, upgrading the trucks, and applying paint and lettering. This article will cover each step to complete the model efficiently and accurately. While the task may seem daunting, this guide will break it down step by step, showing how to transform a bare brass coach into a finished and operational model.

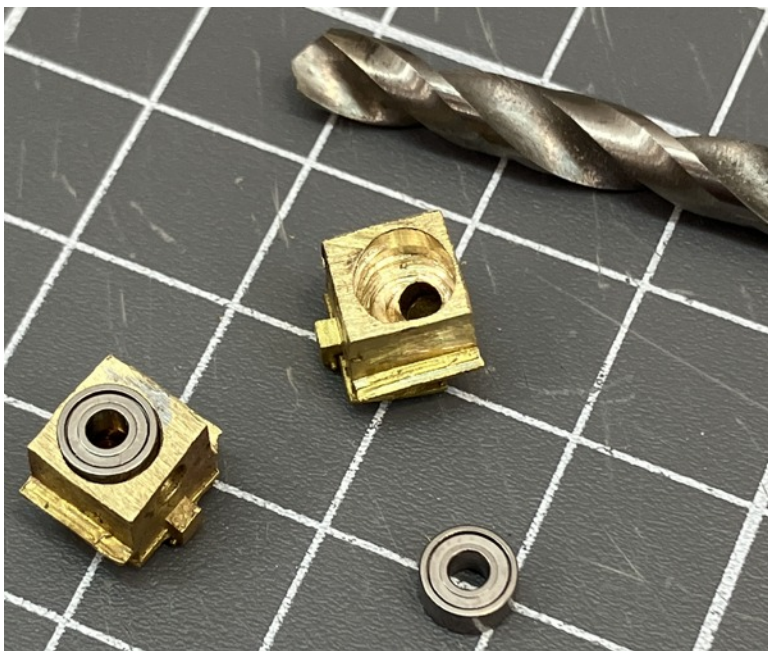
Before tackling aesthetics, I made sure the car performed well. This involved reviewing the commonwealth steel top equalized trucks. I quickly realized the trucks did not roll freely. Since the car is quite heavy, the drag was unacceptable. The original factory-installed trucks, while visually accurate, suffer from high friction and poor rolling characteristics due to their solid bearings, making long consists difficult to pull. With no alternatives on the market of the likes of Wasatch's 2410 trucks for PSC Pullman heavies, I decided to explore the possibility of installing ball-bearings in the journals myself. Upgrading the trucks on a Pecos River Brass passenger car to ball-bearing trucks can dramatically improve its performance, reducing rolling resistance and ensuring smoother operation.



The dismantled trucks. Notice how on the upper side truck the small brass plate keeps the journal from falling out.



Mini ball bearings for the project. The bearings can be purchased in large quantities on Ebay.

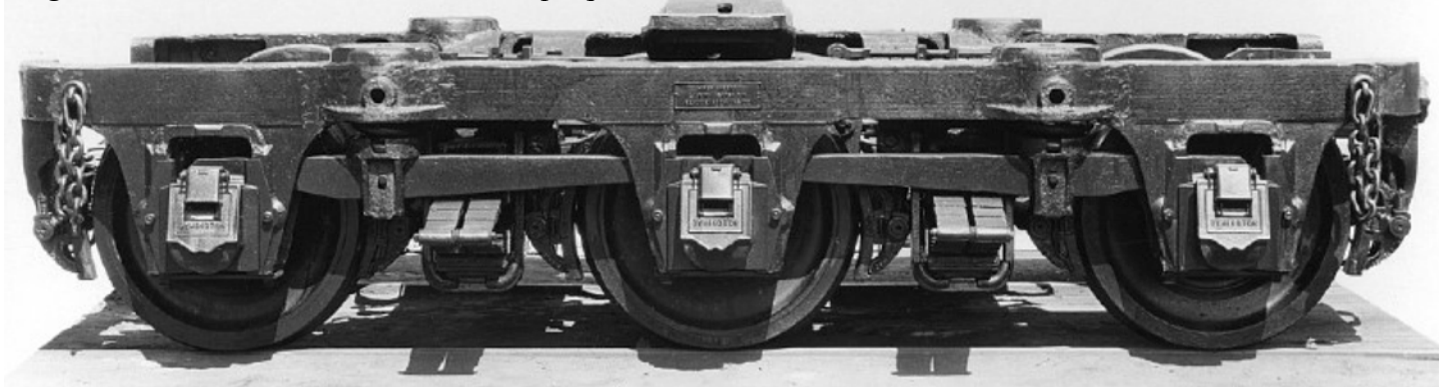


The journals were big enough to house the 5mm bearing. Notice the 5mm drill bit, which was the final bit to bore the journal.

There's a common myth that upgrading to ball-bearing trucks requires specialized tools and advanced skills, which can create unnecessary anxiety for modelers. That may be true for much more complex situations where a drive is involved. However, in this guided process, I'll challenge that notion by using simple, readily available tools to complete the upgrade with ease. By following these steps, you should be able to transform your PRB cars into free-rolling, reliable models that enhance both realism and operational efficiency.

The trucks came apart easily. On the PRB design, the journals are kept in place by a small rectangular plate that is soldered to the back of the journal. Once unsoldered, the journal can be pushed out. For previous projects, I had ordered a batch of 2 x 5 x 2.5mm miniature ball bearings where the bore diameter is 2mm and the outer diameter is 5mm.

Original commonwealth six-wheel steel top equalized trucks.



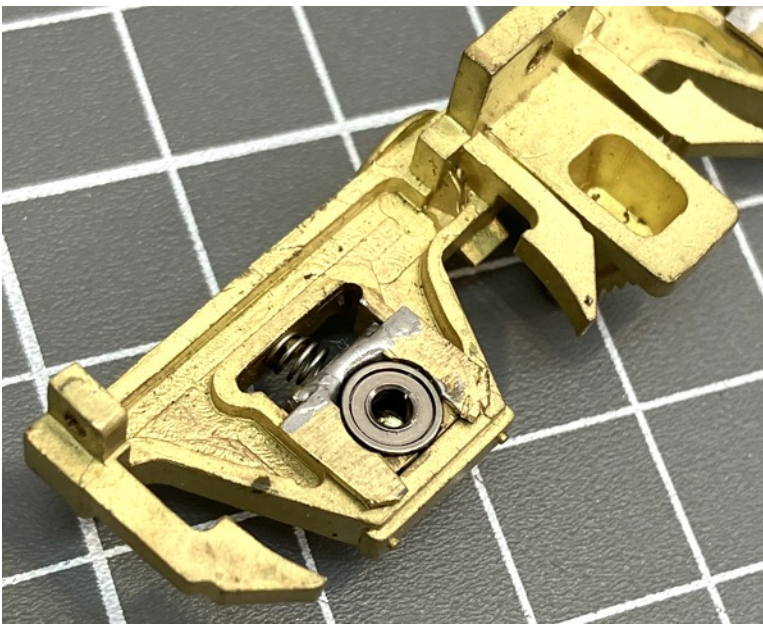
Then, I used a small vise to hold the journal in place while I drilled a hole for the bearing. The trick here was to do it slowly and gradually with increasing bit sizes until the 5mm bearings fell in and out easily.

Once all journals accepted the bearings, I slightly filed their sides to make sure they equalized freely on the truck. This step is key to ensure that there is enough tolerance for the axles to continue to roll freely during operation.

To keep the journals on the trucks, I reused the brass plates in the same factory-installed fashion, only I had to cut them in half due to the width of the newly installed bearings.



The reinstalled journals with bearings. The sides of the journals were filed to ensure a slight play for proper equalization during operation.



The reused plates soldered to the journals keep the bearing from falling off the truck.

The PRB cars come with chemically darkened wheels that cannot be polished to a shiny, prototypical look. Besides, the wheel axles did not fit into the 2mm bore diameter of the ball bearings. So, I had to find an alternative.

For many years now, Golden Gate Depot and 3rd Rail have offered ball bearings on their cars and engines. These have significantly enhanced their performance and operational qualities, and modelers have welcomed this feature unanimously.

I remembered that Golden Gate Depot offered CNC machined, nickel plated, 36'' passenger car wheels with ball bearing supports. I ordered them knowing they would fit these bearings, because I tried them while working on my CB&Q Prewar Budd Chair car ([see issues 11 #5 and #6](#)). Once they arrived, I quickly tried the wheels on the trucks, and to my relief, they were a perfect fit. Another godsend from Scott Mann!

After installing the GGD wheels, I checked the trucks performance making sure they were square and all axles were spinning freely. One journal had to be slightly filed at the bottom because one wheel wasn't sitting on the rails. After this adjustment, everything was looking promising.

At this point, I looked into the bolster/screw situation on the car. When I first got the car, I noticed that the truck dangled badly when the car was picked up. This was due in part to the weight of the truck-mounted generator, and in part due to the screw used to attach the truck to the bolster. PRB used a rather short 1,5mm screw that was barely holding the trucks in place. I decided to tap for a larger 2,5mm screw. The upgrade was successful in that the trucks no longer hanged and the securing was more robust.



The GGD wheels to the left and the PRB wheels on the right. The GGD set fits the bearings, and their reflective appearance is more prototypical.



The PRB 1.5mm screw on the left, and the 2.5mm screw on the right. The black bushing keeps the springs from going through the plates.



Holding the car up in the air, the trucks no longer dangle thanks to the new truck screw.



The newly installed wheel sets. Once weathered, the clean, shiny look will improve the car's appearance.

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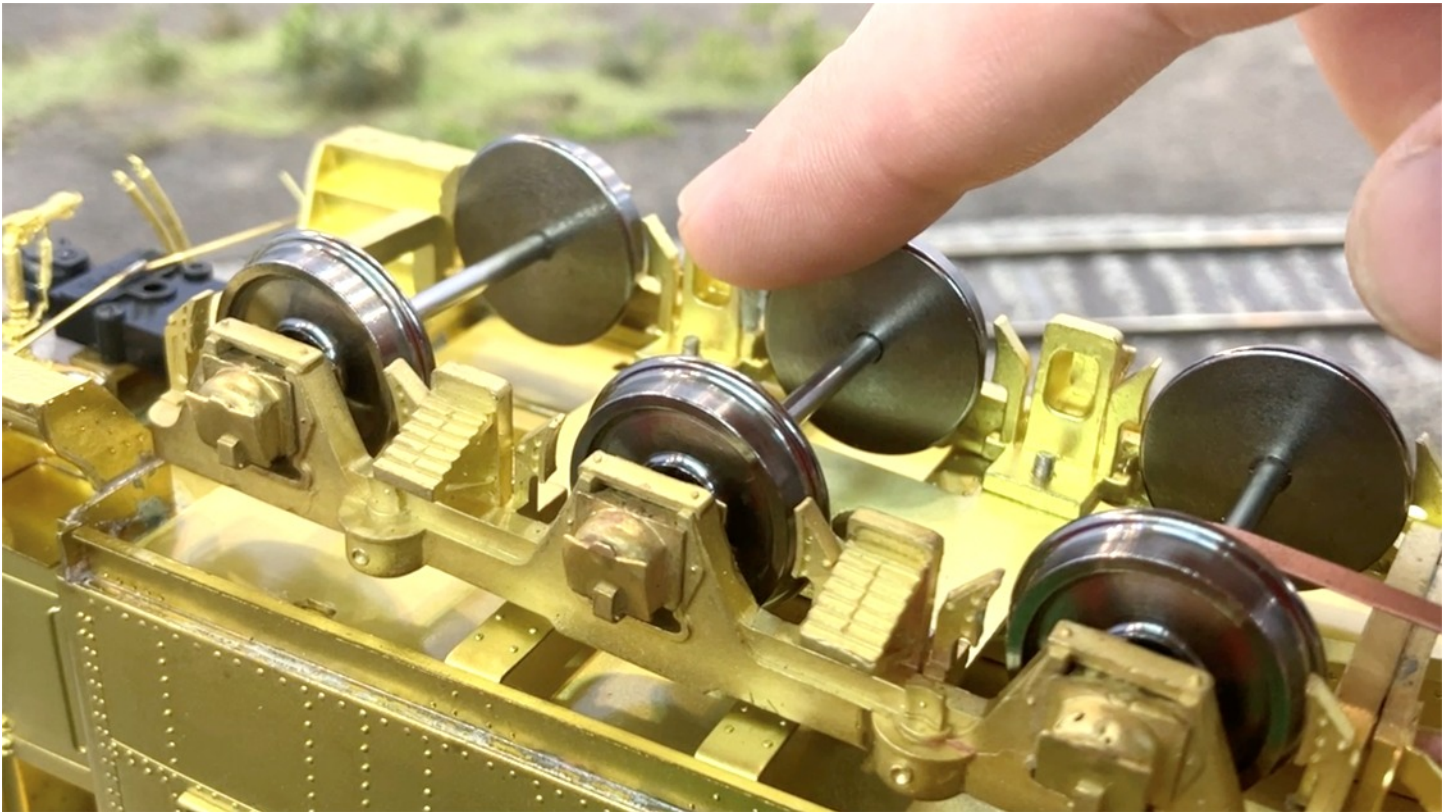
Grab Iron Ends (Nut/Bolt) and for modern cars, Grab Iron Ends (Rivet). These small parts will really dress up an older Athern/Reynolds/AllNation

<https://modelrailroadresource.com/WP/>

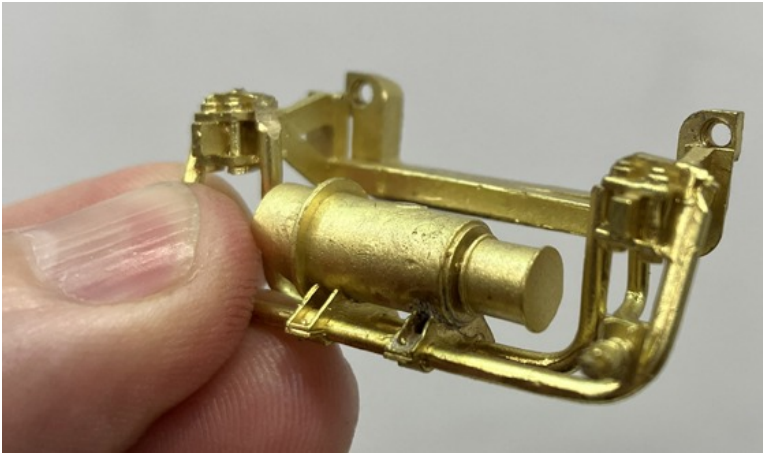


Left: The car sits perfectly leveled on its upgraded trucks. And, it now runs beautifully.

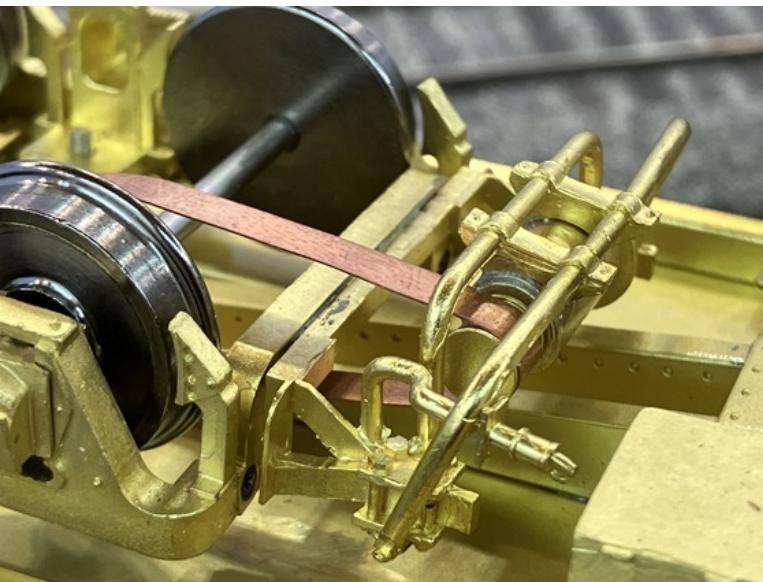
Below: [Click on this link or picture below to watch how well the wheels spin, even before oiling!](#)



An easy visual upgrade to this assembly is adding a simulated belt. I usually cut copper strips and form them to hug the generator pulleys. These can be soldered or glued. For this project, I used two-part epoxy glue to hold the strips in place. As you can see from the images, the detail is quite visible on the prototype, and it certainly enhances the look on the model. On part two of this project, we'll focus on making a car interior and finishing the car with painting and lettering.



The distinctive truck mounted generator assembly before the added belt.



The assembly after the addition of the simulated belt.



On the AT&SF heavyweight cars, the truck mounted generator belt was openly visible. To simulate the rubber material, the copper strip will be painted matte black.

Building a Southern Railroad 36' SU Boxcar (Part 2)



By William W. Davis

Back in the November / December of [The O Scale Resource Magazine](#), we looked at the history of these unique boxcars. We also built the basic body and detailed the under frame. In this part, we are going to build the roof and detail the sides.

Roof:

I started the roof by adding a sub roof of Evergreen Styrene .040 sheet with a .0125 x .0125 strip down the center on the underside. I then added the actual roof pieces cut from Evergreen Styrene .020 plain sheet. I flushed the ends but overhung the sides walls of the car by about 2 scale inches. I later discovered that I should have used .030 for the roof. Since this thickness issue would be only seen on the sides, I added a piece of Evergreen Styrene .010 x .040 strip to underside of the overhang.

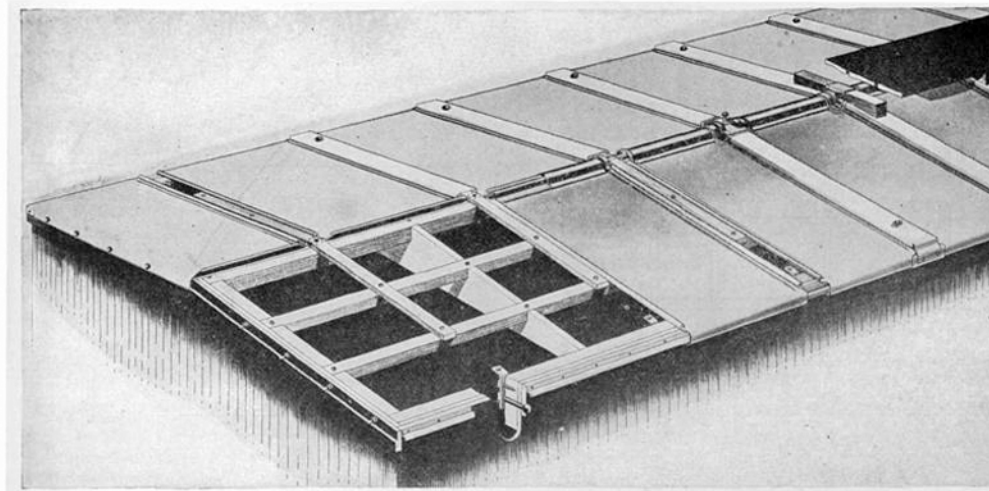


Fig. 745—Hutchins All-Steel Roof to Replace Inside and Outside Metal Roof

Now a Hutchins style roof was made up of panels with a raised rib over the seams and NBW near the outer edge. To complete the roof I needed to add these roof ribs. With some research and help from friends like Michael George and Gene Diemling, I was able to get the information I needed to build the ribs.

With all the information gathered and based on the drawing in Part 1, I laid out the roof ribs. It took a couple tries to get this right. Using a pencil to draw the layout and erasing it until I felt I had it right.



Once I had the layout done I cut strips from a .005 sheet of Evergreen Styrene. These strips represented the lower part of the panel seam caps. This lower part rounded over the edge so I cut small pieces of the .005 x .100 and glued them to the roof edge. I then cut them to length and lightly sanded the joint with 400 grit sandpaper so the top and edge piece looked like one continuous piece. The roof end wrapped over the car end. I represented this detail by adding a piece of Evergreen Styrene HO .011 x .043 styrene strip.



Using .040 x .060 styrene I cut the main ribs that covered the joints of the panels that made up the Hutchins roof. I then rounded off the top corners and added a little “notch” in the outer end. To make the notch, I cut a V in the end and rounded the end of the rib. Then, once installed, I used a small mini file to make sure the notches were the same on each rib. I also beveled where the ribs met in the center. Then using San Juan Details casting #144, I added the roof walk supports. These supports were mounted on the ribs. Finally, at one scale foot in from the edge, I added the NBW’s using San Juan Details #99 NBW castings.



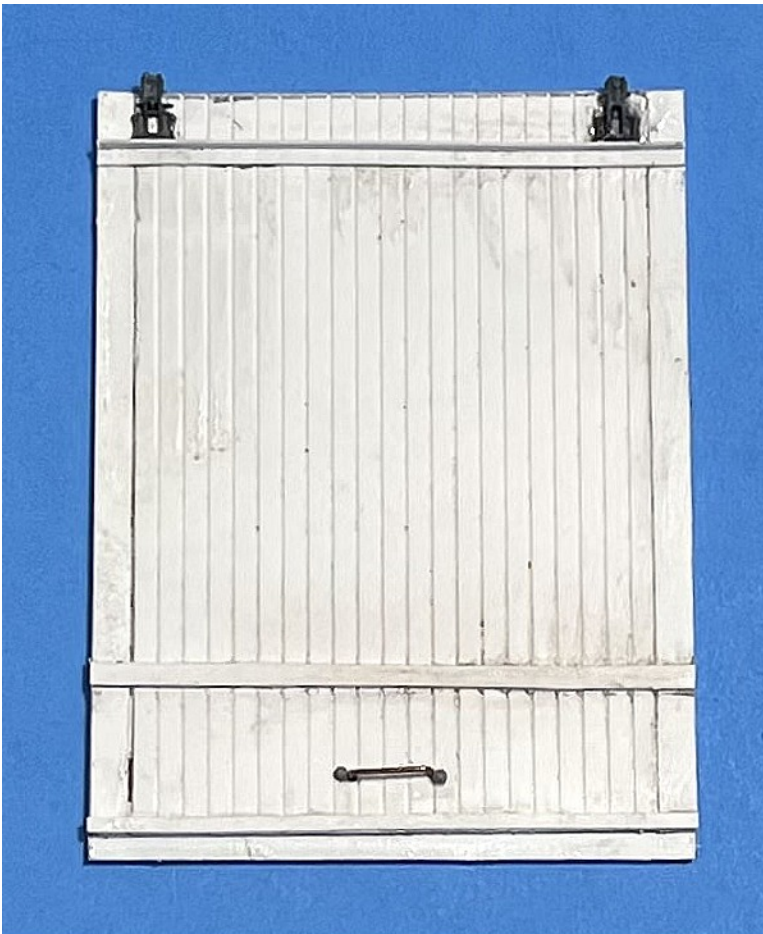
Now I know that it really won't be seen once the roof walk is in place, but I still decided to add the center joint cover where the panels meet. I made this detail by adding a piece of Evergreen Styrene .015 x .040 to their .040 half round. I then cut it into sections and glued it between the roof ribs. To finish the roof details, I added the intermediate rib located between the main ribs using Evergreen Styrene .020 x .030. It seems that not all of these cars had this intermediate rib, but the plan showed it so I decided to include it.



Before I added the roof walk pieces I sprayed the roof with Tamiya fine gray primer. Actually, I will spray the areas that will be under the roof walk with Floquil Southern freight car brown and then do the roof walk.

Doors:

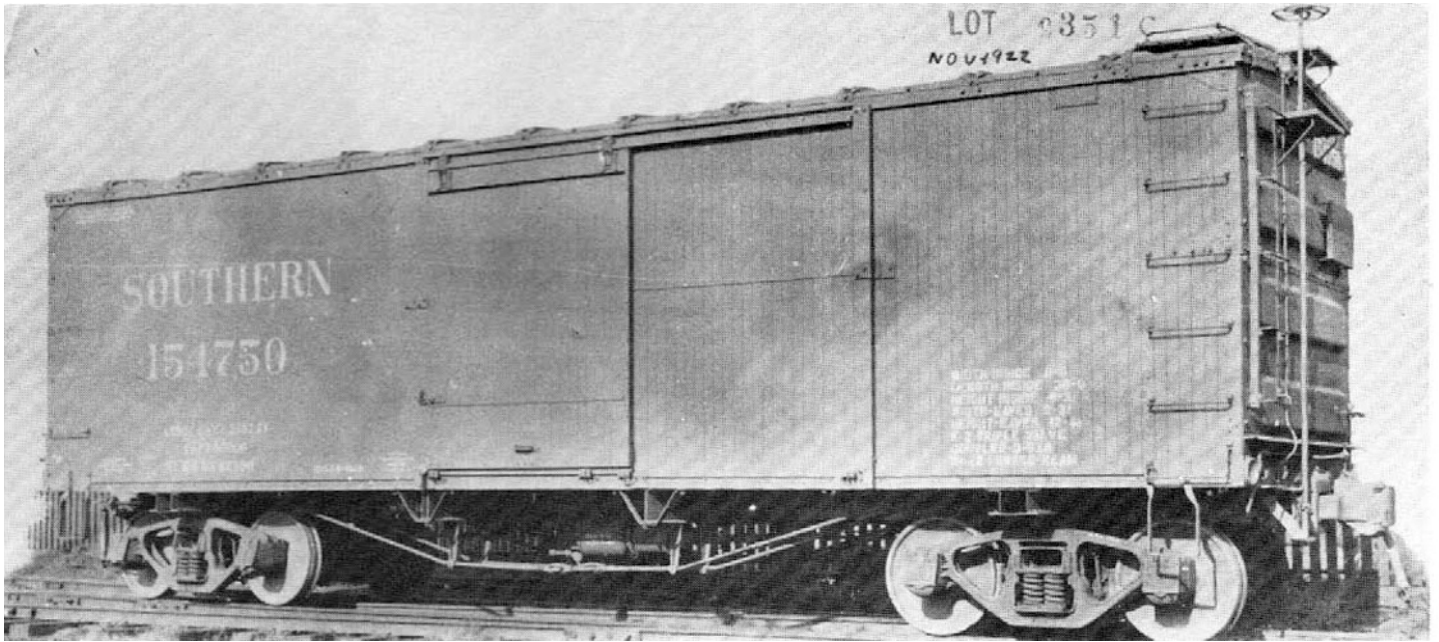
Like so many other parts of this car, the door was of a unique design. I first cut a piece of Evergreen Styrene .020 sheet according to the plan. I then overlaid it with the exterior siding. According to the plan, the siding had a 5" board on both side of the door while the rest of the door is standard 3 1/4" car siding. I used Evergreen Styrene #125 .020 x .100 for the outer pieces and #2067 car siding for the rest. There are 3 strips across the door. The one at the top of the door is an angle. This goes just below the door hangers. For the door hanger, I used San Juan Details casting #6. I then made the angle using Evergreen Styrene .010 x .040 and formed at an angle. For the middle one, which is a foot plus from the bottom of the door, I used Evergreen Styrene .010 x .080. Finally, I added the bottom cross brace piece made from Evergreen Styrene HO .011 x .043. To complete the door, I added the handle for opening the door from the ground using San Juan Details NBW #1 and Tichy .015 phosphate bronze wire.



Door area:

Once again we have a unique detail on this part of the car. Typically there is a full length door stop on the left side of the door. This is also where the door lock was installed.

On the right there is usually a wood block or a metal bracket as a door stop. However, once again, this car design is unique as it has a full length wood door stop on both the left and the right sides.



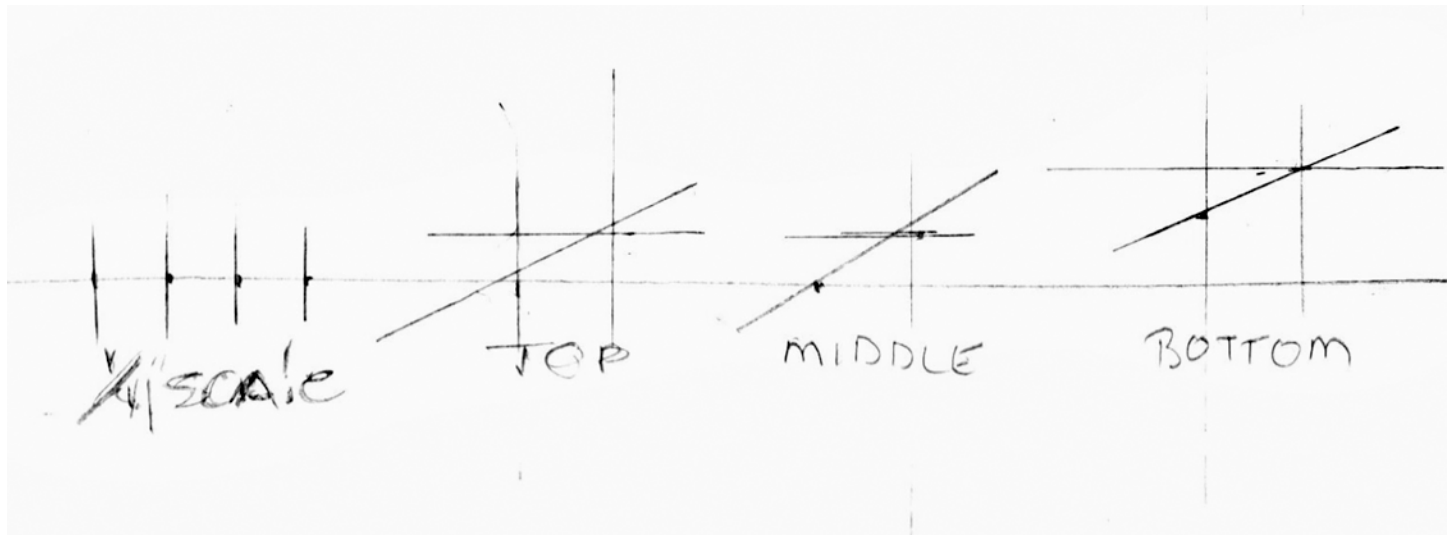
I used a piece of Evergreen Styrene .040 x .060 to make these stops. The door stops had a pair NBW both top and bottom. I used San Juan Details #99 NBW casting to represent this detail. Then I made the mid way metal bracket out of a piece of Evergreen Styrene .005 sheet and added Archer rivets.



At the same height as the mid way bracket was a metal strip that protected the siding when the door was opened or closed. I used a piece of Evergreen Styrene .010 x .040 to represent this metal strip. I then added a latch to the left side using San Juan Details #5 boxcar door latch set. Finally, I found it unusual, but there was a flashing detail over the door hanger track. I made this by cutting a narrow strip of Evergreen .005 sheet.

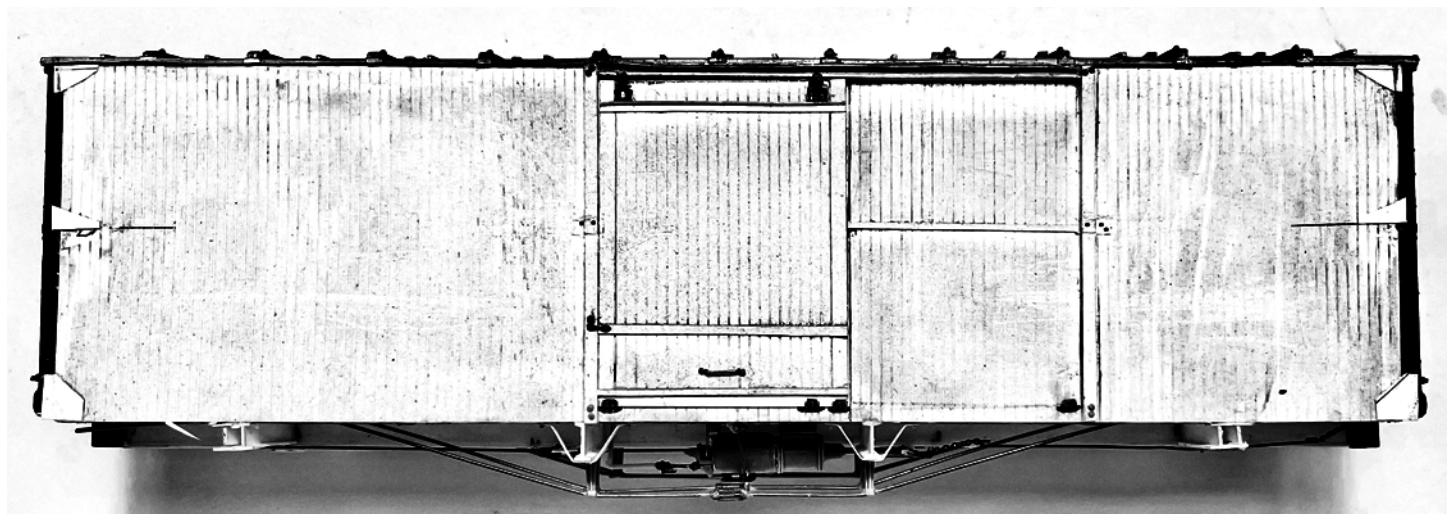
Finishing the Sides:

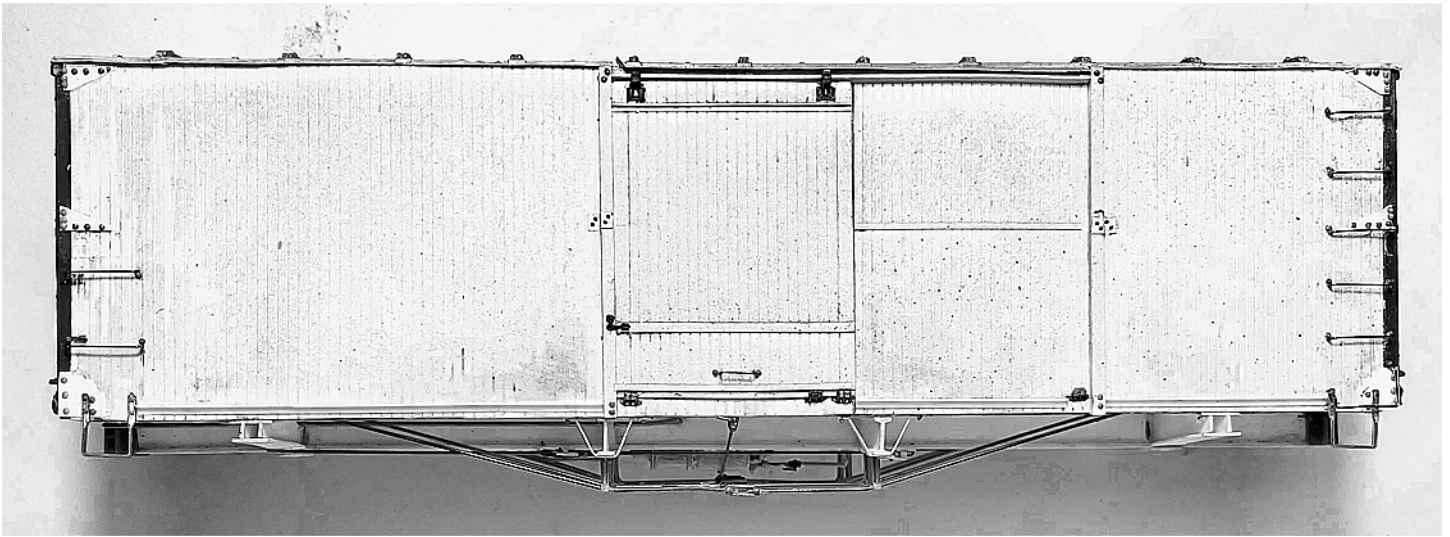
As part of the way the metal Hutchins ends were attached, there were 3 brackets that attached the ends to the side of the wooden body. I drew a pattern for these brackets which gave me the general size needed. I made them out of Evergreen Styrene .005 sheet material.



Then, using the scale plan cut them to the exact size I wanted and glued them in place.

Once these were dry, I reprinted the plan and cut off the end of the sides so I would have the layout of the grab irons. On the ladder end of the sides, there wasn't an actual ladder but several grab irons. I did this layout work before adding the rivets and NBW details to the brackets.





Cameras can be cruel! The dark color on the side pictures is overspray from when I sprayed the roof. Since the rest of the car will get sprayed with the same primer, I didn't tape it off to avoid overspray. However, it is darker in the pictures than in real life.

Another unique detail is the bottom grab iron on the ladder side. Instead of being a simple straight grab iron it is L shaped.



The grab irons were mounted with NBW's. To represent them I used San Juan Details #1 NBW and Tichy .015 bronze wire. I like using .015 wire for the grab irons because it scales out to be 3/4 of an inch and looks better than the larger wire size that some use. To detail the brackets, I used a combination of San Juan Details #154 rivets and San Juan Detail #1 NBW. I used a set of San Juan Details Line brass stirrup steps. I should have made my own stirrup step as the one on the prototype is a little longer than the San Juan Details one.

One final detail to completes the sides. Apparently some of these cars had an angle pieces running in sections at the bottom the of the side.



The picture I used of the car in part one didn't have it (see [Part 1 in the November/December Issue](#)). The car in this part of this article series does have it. So I decided to add it. I used Evergreen Styrene .060 angle for this detail. Here is the car so far with the roof and under frame primed sitting on the trucks I will be using.



This will complete Part 2 of this series. We will complete end details, roof walk, the painting, lettering and weathering in Part 3. Till then, happy modeling!

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Finishing a Brass Freight Trailer

By Martin Brechbiel

Continuing to decrease the mountain of projects on the shelving unit, I found in the next box an unfinished brass freight trailer shell (**Photos 1-3**). This was probably one of those impetuous eBay purchases that once delivered was shoulder-shrugged into a box and off-loaded its space on the shelf. The space on the shelf has since gotten more valuable along with the footprint that the entire shelving unit occupies. Some projects have since departed for new basements to lurk in while others, like this one have migrated onto the bench on one of the work stations.

Photo 1

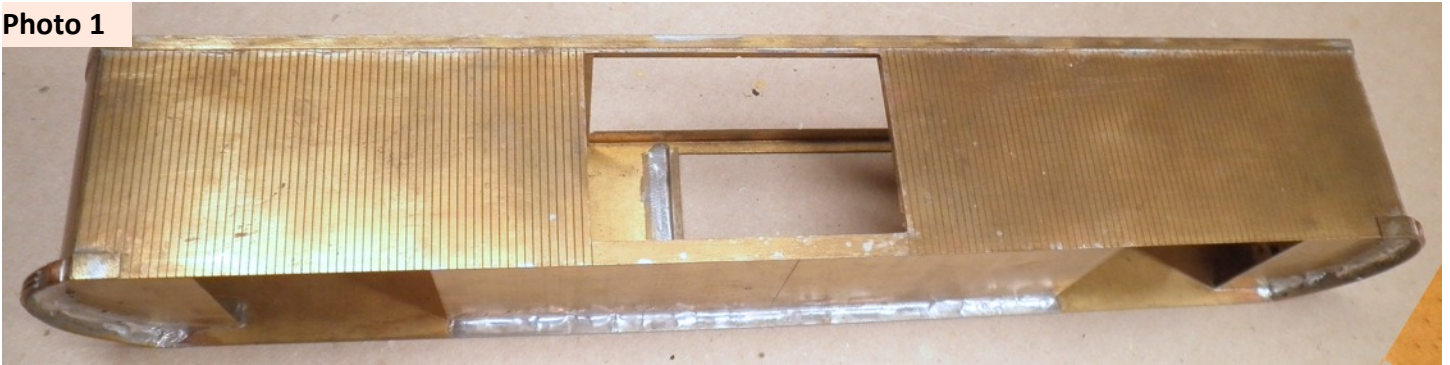


Photo 2



Photo 3



This shell is of unknown origins, solidly assembled, but lacking a roof, a floor (and a few details there), and doors. These are all reasonably straightforward addressed. The roof might pose a challenge dependent on style desired due to the car width. Being traction rolling stock, it's about a scale foot narrower than standard scale roofing parts that are actually readily available. The solution was one I had written about elsewhere years ago and had in my supply rack. Lengths of round reefer roof were ripped down the middle to remove roughly a 1/4" and then the two parts were reassembled using wood glue.

A bit of fine stripwood was added to bring the width up to that required for use on traction rolling stock (**Photos 4, 5**).

Photo 4

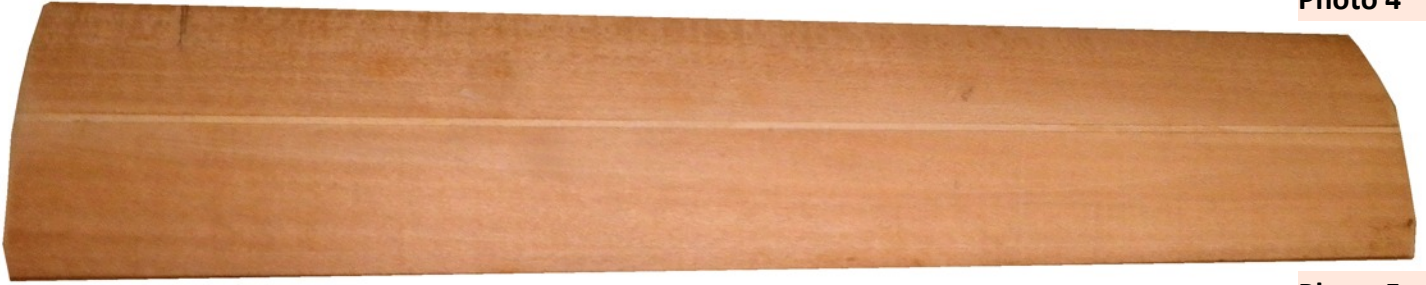


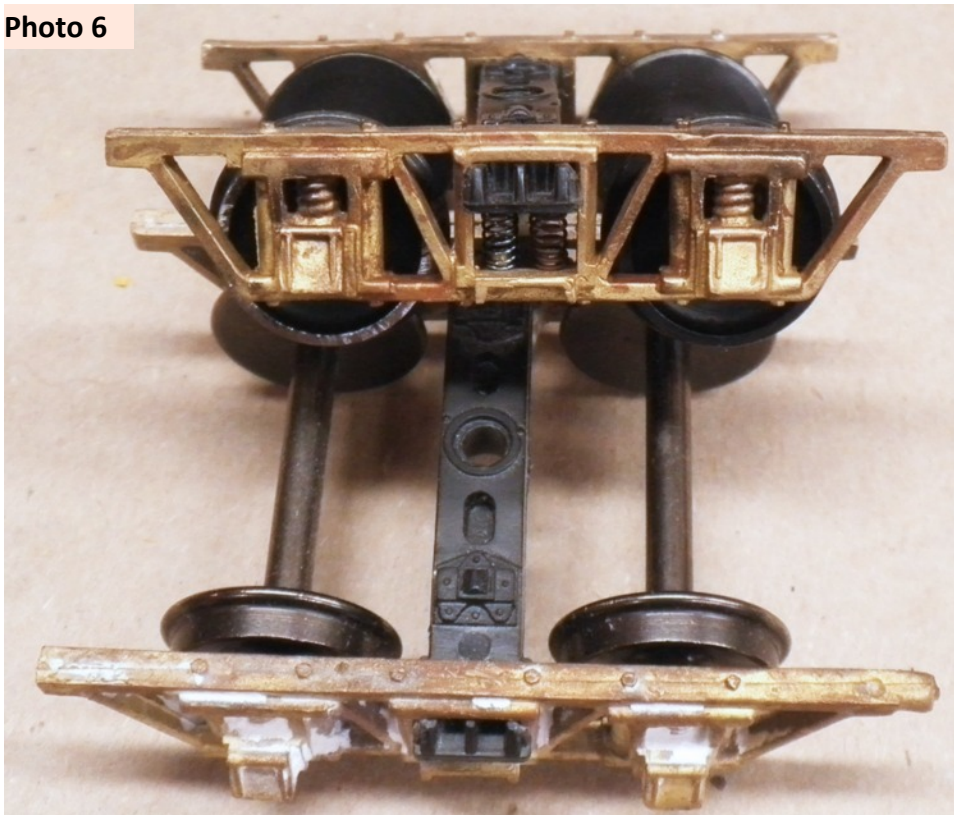
Photo 5



I neglected to include trucks and couplers in the list of needs. I had in a drawer a pair of “interesting” trucks that appeared a marriage of inconvenience yet usable for this project (**Photo 6**). I’ll come back to radial couplers in due course. In the meantime, putting the floor to order was the real starting point on this project.

The existing floor had two cut out areas and a lot of fairly heavy solder. It was also recessed quite a distance up into the body. I added a sub-floor and basswood stripwood framing laid flat spanning the entire floor secured in place with Goo and CA. On top of that subfloor was glued into place 1/16” thick x 1/8” spacing scribed siding cut and fitted to fill the entire underbody area. Now the car has a floor and base for added all of the underbody components.

Photo 6



A pair of resin bolsters drilled and tapped for 4-40 were fitted in place and secured with Goo and CA. Stirrup steps were formed from 0.015” x 0.060” brass (Detail Assoc.) and similarly secured at the four corners of the underbody. Center steps below the door openings were similarly formed and secured, but with a back to the step soldered into place. Needle beams were fabricated from two pieces of 3/16” channel sandwiching some 0.040” x 0.188” strip styrene using MEK to weld the styrene together as a single unit.

Queen posts (10”) (Grandt Line No. 70) were added to the ends of the needle beams. Truss rods were cut from 0.025” phosphorbronze wire (Tichy) and anchor plates (0.015” x 0.060” brass) were

soldered to the ends. These plates were secured at the bolsters with the truss rods bent into shape fitting into the queen posts and connected together with turnbuckles (Tichy, No. 2004). A white metal brake cylinder casting was mounted into place on a raised platform made of stripwood and more scribed siding. The brake rods (0.025" phosphorbronze wire) fitted into the ends of the casting and secured there with CA and with Goo at the bolster end (**Photo 7**).

Photo 7

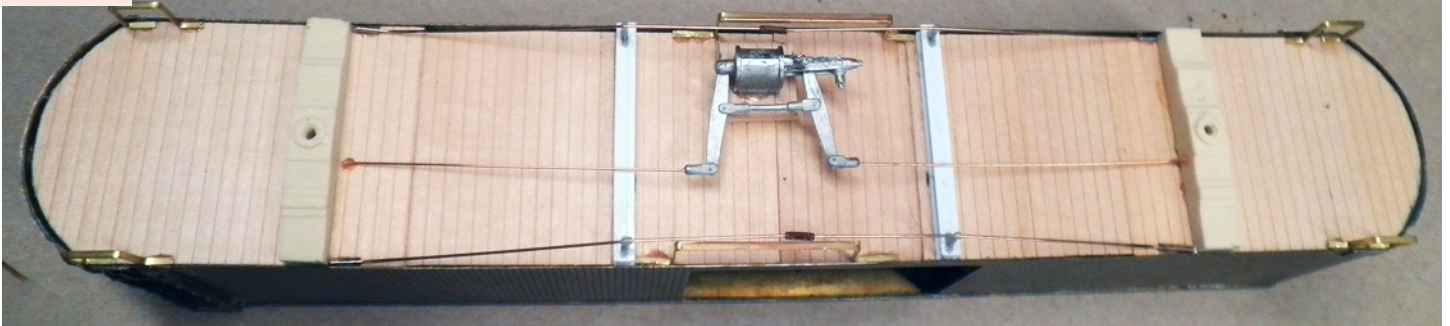


Photo 8

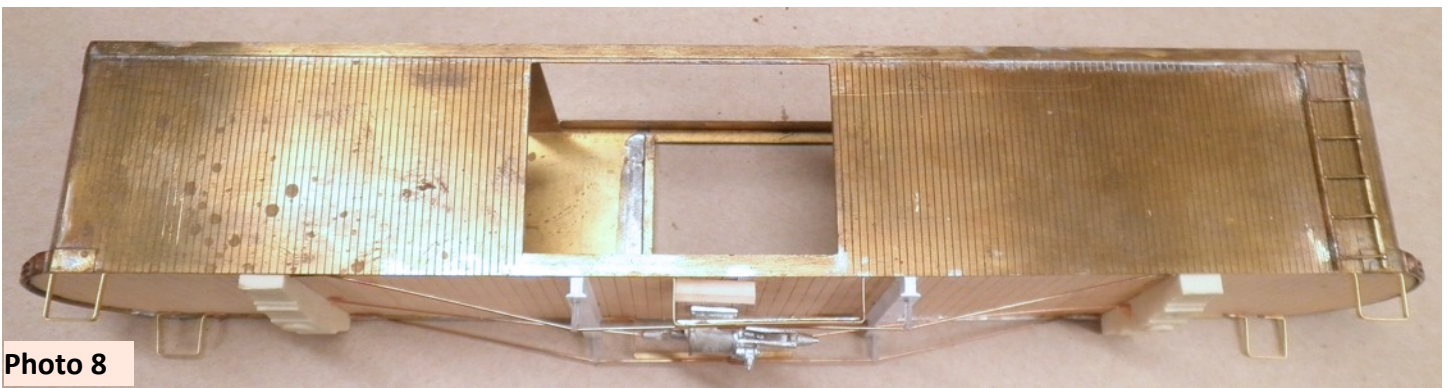


Photo 9



Brass ladders were soldered into place at the right ends on both sides of the car body (**Photo 8**). Doors were built up on top of styrene car siding (Evergreen No. 2067) cut to fit the openings in the car sides. I decided to make this into an interior double door arrangement to fit the size of opening. The opening was also neatly framed suggesting that interior doors were the original design. Framing around the doors was done using 0.020" x 0.188 strip styrene with cross members of 0.020" x 0.080" strip styrene. A 0.080" x 0.080" spacer was applied at the top of each door to fit it into the interior brass framing. Some "I" beam bracing was added across the back as these doors seemed prone to warping a bit during assembly using MEK. Door handles were applied using 0.025" phosphorbronze wire (**Photo 9**).

Prior to mounting the doors into place, door grabs were soldered into place on the car sides adjacent to the door openings. The doors were then fitted into the interior framing and secured with Goo and CA (**Photo 10**).

Photo 10

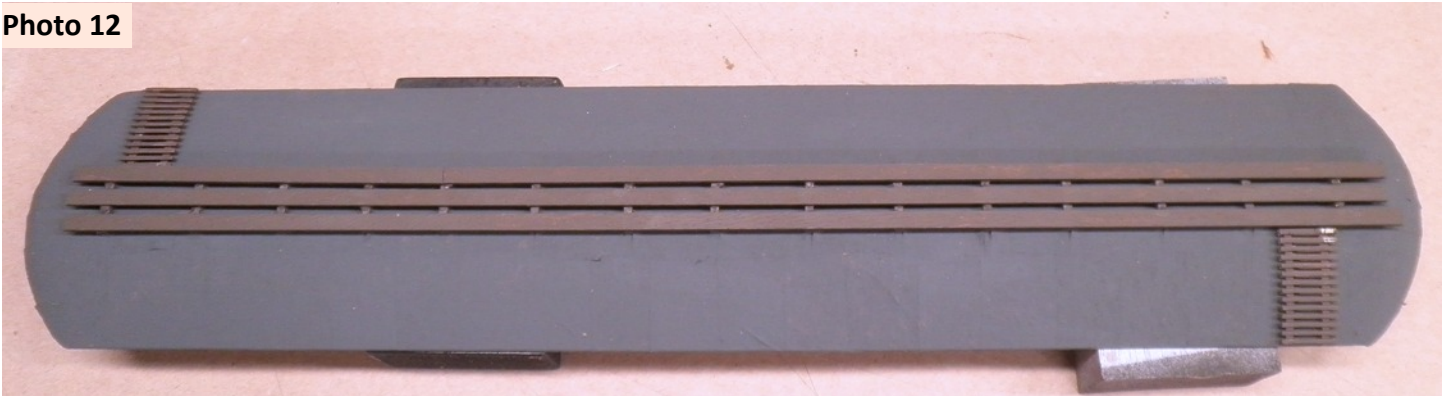


Shaping the ends of the roof was quickly done using a 4-in-hand tool and some 60 grit sandpaper stapled around a bit of 2" x 4" (**Photo 11**). As the roof is going to receive a tarred canvas finish overlaying the surface, the wood does not have to be perfectly smooth or sealed. Roof walk supports (Grandt Line No. 144) were added to the roof secured in place with Goo and CA. Paper napkin cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " strips was applied over the wood in a 50% overlapping pattern and glued into place using diluted wood glue. After drying, the excess napkin was trimmed away using a fresh scalpel blade. The roof was then painted Lark Dark Gray (Floquil). Roof walk boards (HO 4" x 12") and two small white metal roof mat castings (Current Line C-416) were painted Roof Brown (Polly Scale). Prior to painting, the roof mat castings were shaped against the roof to match the contour of where they would be mounted. Once all the paint was dry, the roof walk boards and mats were mounted into place (**Photo 12**).

Photo 11



Photo 12



The car body was painted Hunt Club Green and that paint was left to dry for a few days (**Photo 13**). Thereafter, the underbody was painted Flat Black (**Photo 14**), the steps were painted Steam Black (Polly Scale), and the roof was mounted onto the body. Rather than rely on just the edges of the body and a probable messy glue experience, those cross members spanning the car sides were first shimmed up to be flush with the top of the car sides with some scrap styrene. Then the roof was mounted to those shims to keep the edges clean. Radial couplers were added formed from some brass castings married to Kadee couplers and secured in place with some pan head screws. The trucks (**Photo 6**) were painted black and secured in place with 4-40 screws.

Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15

One final detail that had to be added was a brake wheel at the one end of the car body. This was built up as a unit from a brass brake wheel (Precision Scale No. 40778) soldered to a scrap of 0.028" wire that was used to mount that through a brake wheel housing casting. A length of blackened chain was appended to the base of the housing. This unit was then mounted to the one end of the car. The free end of the chain was trimmed to reach the end platform with some slack and then secured in place (**Photo 15**).

Photo 16

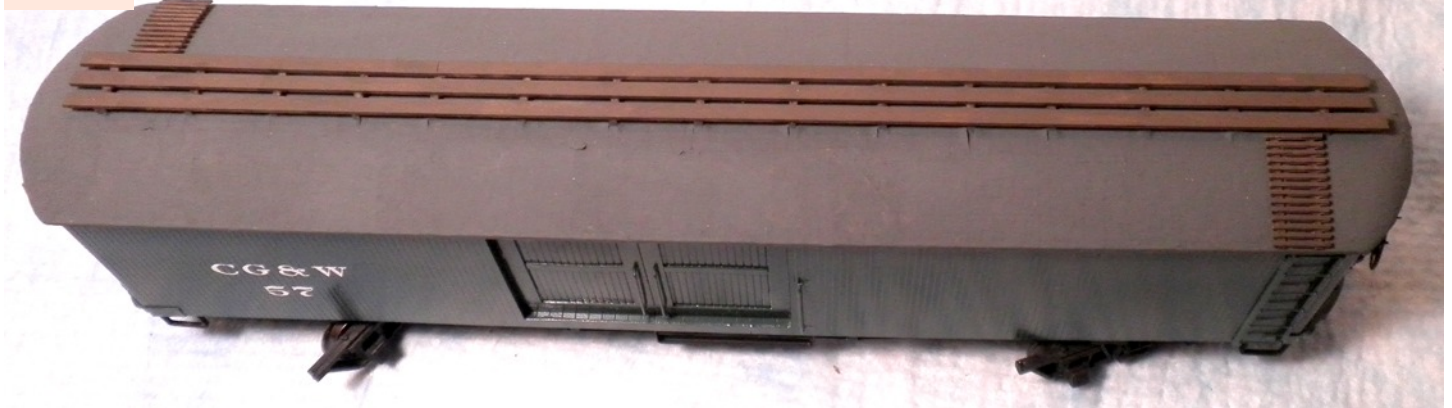


I decided that this car was one I would keep on the roster so that required lettering. My aging stock of dry transfers that I had printed by Clover House were still usable, so CG&W 57 was applied to both sides of the car to complete this build after a quick overspray of Clear Matte (**Photos 16-18**). A little touch up paint here and there and this car was ready for service.

Photo 17



Photo 18



SUPER DETAILING THE ALL NATION LINE NW2 SWITCHER PT 3

By Greg Viggiano

Editors note: Part 1 was featured in the [The O Scale Resource Magazine March/April 2024 here](#) while Part 2 was in the [The O Scale Resource Magazine September/October 2024 here](#).

The third part of this series continues with super detailing the All Nation NW2 Switcher and focuses on the rest of the finishing details that are best saved for last. These details include installing the cab interior, window glass, wagon wheel antenna, window awnings and grill cover, underframe hooks and chains, decals, and weathering.



Weathering and Decals

There are a lot of ways to approach weathering for different operating environments and dozens of books (and even more magazine articles) have been written on the subject. I find that inexpensive women's cosmetics and blending brushes are excellent and give me the application control and appearance I need (in addition to the atomized iron powder for real rust where it's needed). Using an air brush for this type of thing scares me because there's no easy way to remove too-much-weathering after it's been applied. With powders, you can wash them off or rub them away.



When you're satisfied with the weathering, you can apply a super flat matte clear, and you're done.

For simplicity, I decided on the early Santa Fe NW paint and lettering scheme - basic black before the zebra stripes. I wasn't confident that the zebra stripe pilot decals were going to fit properly given all of the protrusions and other raised surface details. (If you want to accuse me of being lazy, I won't argue the point).

The light weathering for this switcher was applied using atomized iron powder that actually produces real rust for the most authentic appearance possible.

The iron powder is brushed on the surfaces that require corrosion and oxidation. When mixed with water, the iron powder creates a stain-like effect that, when fully dry, leaves a real rust film. The process can be repeated until the desired amount of corrosion is achieved.

It's especially good on the high-wear surfaces, like treads and couplers.



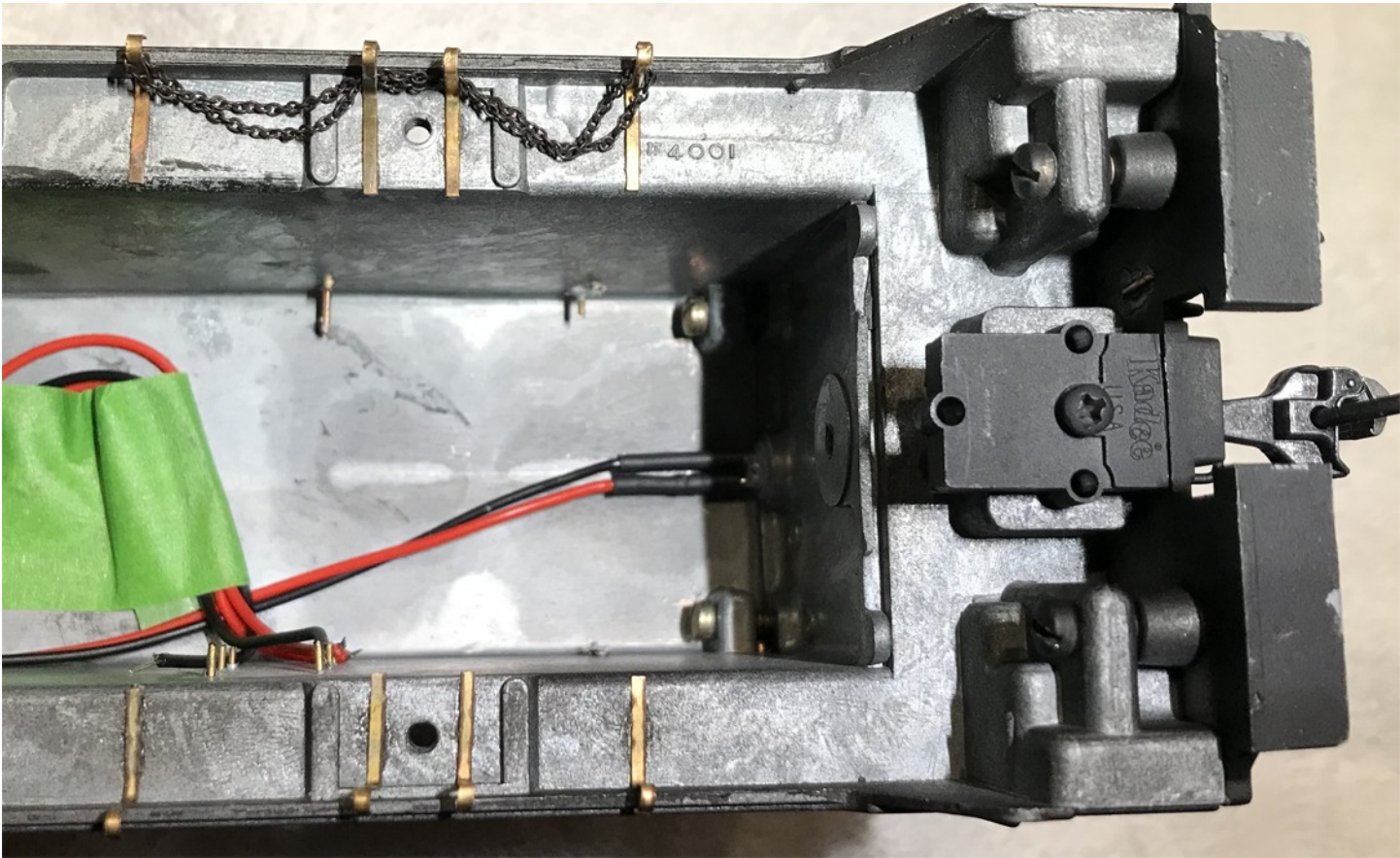
Hooks and Chains

The underframe hooks and chains were made from extra photoetch strips designed for the window awnings, cut to size and bent to form with a photoetch bending tool.

Al Judy used to like adding additional chains hanging from his narrow gauge engines for added detail. I can certainly understand his preference now.

The hooks were put in place with CA glue. The black oxide chains (27-links per inch from A-Line) also provided a good match to the particular Santa Fe NW2 2415 prototype.

Oil stains are also applied using a light machine oil that was contaminated / mixed with a brown chalk to make the oil more obvious on the black painted surfaces - especially around the fuel tanks, pilots, couplers, coupler linkages, and MU hoses.





The photoetched wagon wheel antenna was saved for the final assembly mostly due to how fragile the part is. The triangular antenna base had to be 3D printed because the brass parts proved too difficult to solder together.

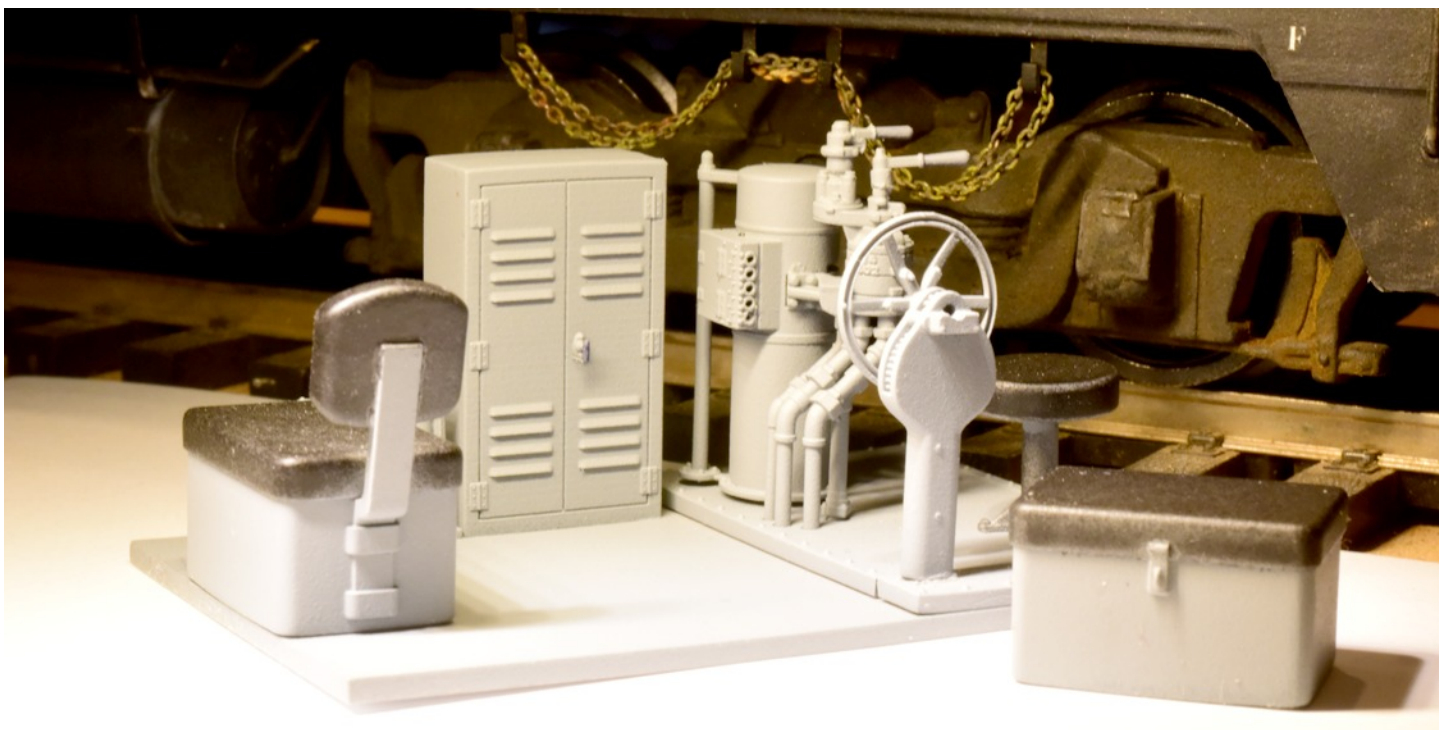
On the prototype, the raised nose numbers were made from cast aluminum. To accommodate the nose numbers, the All Nation front marker lights had to be removed.

To reproduce the cast aluminum numbers, I had to develop a CAD file with a sprue for 3D printing. The sprue made placement and alignment very easy. The raised numbers were painted before installation. (See picture on next page.)



The Interior

The cab interior was retrofitted from the Train Kitchen's SW1 cab interior kit (printed by 3D Central, \$49). The level of detail in this kit is simply outstanding and is only exceeded by 3D Central's high resolution printing fidelity. It actually looks better than a lot of injection molded parts I've seen.



There are even microscopic openings in the latch loop on the bench lockers (if you can believe it). The cab's floor had to be tailored to fit the NW2's interior space, but it worked out rather well (the NW2 interior floor area measures 1.450" by 2.275").

When trimming the resin printed cabin floor, I didn't realize how brittle the resin was. I needed to remove two floorboard widths to fit the All Nation NW2 interior length. Rather than just cut off the end, I wanted to preserve the perimeter frame that Sarah had so faithfully detailed. The cutting did not go very well and a gentle hand is needed here. After gluing the resin splinters back together, the two floor sections seamed together nicely and the cut was perfectly hidden by the paint work.

To really appreciate the detail and fidelity of these parts, you'll need magnification. Preferably, 4X magnification is good; and I don't think I would have been able to do this part of the project without an Optivisor and a micrometer.

Some parts needed to be glued to the floor and others needed to be attached to the inside walls of the cab.

I'm very partial to using lacquer-based automotive paints whenever possible. These paints tend to be very high quality, easy to use, and very forgiving if you should make a mistake, ie. runs - that when fully dry, actually evaporate and disappear. The glass was installed only on the front and rear window openings using microscope slide covers and watch crystal adhesive. There is something about using real glass that greatly enhances the model's overall appearance and realism.

Afterthoughts about the project

So far, this has been a fun project and a useful modeling skills exercise. If I was inclined to continue this project, I would be interested in adding better trucks with Stanton drives. This would create more internal room for power on-board batteries and dead rail electronics with a bigger DCC speaker enclosure.

I would also try to create perforated, photoetched hood grills and photograph the finished switcher against an actual proto-switching railroad yard background (using photomontage software).

I plan to bring this model to the Chicago March Meet so people can see it "in person."

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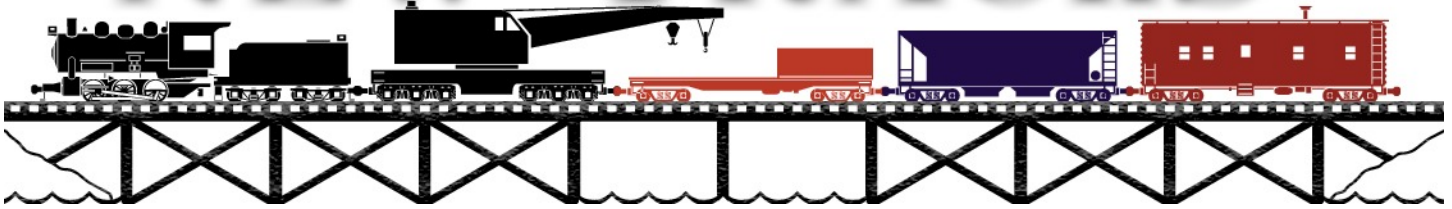


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NEW TRACKS



Mentor Definition: A Trusted Counselor or Guide

By Contributing Editor Jim Kellow MMR

Build Better models with a mentor”

It’s not just me saying it...

I recently read an article in the *NRHSA Hobby Merchandiser* magazine by Gary Barker of Barker Leadership Institute that I believe can make everyone a better modeler. Gary said:

“Failure is often the foundation for growth. The cycle of success I live by is this: try, fail, learn, improve, and try again. This consistence intentional process can help you get better every day.” Gary continued:

“People often say a wise person learns from their own mistakes, and a wiser one learns from the mistakes of others. While that’s true I challenge you to go a step further. Learn from the successes of others. When you do you are not just avoiding pitfalls but also finding blueprints for accelerated growth.”

I interpret what Gary is saying to mean “To become a better modeler, build more models with the help of a mentor.”

That’s what ‘New Tracks Modeling’ is all about. Please follow Gary’s advice and good luck with your modeling.

New Tracks Modeling: 2024 Wrap up and what’s up in 2025

2024 has been a highly successful year for New Tracks Modeling.

1. Our Weekly Zoom shows increased viewership, both live on Zoom and YouTube, and on the videos of the shows on our YouTube Channel. At viewers request this year we expanded our My Build segments, and started new zoom show segments with a knowledgeable host for N, HO, S, S Hi-Rail, O, O Hi-Rail, and G scales, diorama modeling, new modeling technologies, hobby shops, NMRA Divisions and local clubs, Watch Me Build Kits, Scratch-building, and even an open “What do you want to talk about?” segment.
2. Our Webmaster has improved our website, which has gained viewership and subscribers, who get advance weekly Zoom show agendas, login Zoom links, and copies of our monthly newsletter.
3. We continue to write about New Tracks Modeling updates and activities in each issue of *The O Scale Resource* online magazine. Unfortunately, *The S Scale Resource* magazine stopped publication, so to get S scale news, you need to go to our *Observations Newsletter*. Please contact our newsletter editor, Martin Breckbiel MMR at Martin.Brechbiel@newtracksmodeling.com.
4. I completed the first year of the monthly model railroading column in my local *Chronicle newspaper*. I believe these articles reach future model railroaders that are not being reached by our normal model railroad publications.

5. Our monthly *Observations Newsletter* with editor Martin Breckbiel MMR completed its first year with rave reviews. Its distribution has grown very significantly this year thanks to it being distributed to all our website subscribers and readers of *The S Scale Resource* and *O Scale Resource* digital magazines. It is becoming a significant all scales and gauges modeling digital publication which is free to subscribers.
6. We started a New Tracks Modeling Facebook group. It is designed for followers and subscribers to continue and further explore subjects they either heard about on our Zoom or YouTube shows, or saw in our newsletter, or just to start discussions they feel will be of interest to other modelers. It already has over 1,000 followers.
7. We expanded our Scholarship Program by awarding three \$2,000.00 scholarships to modelers attending Colleges, Universities, or Technical Institutions throughout the country. You will hear more about this program in a minute from our Scholarship Committee Chairman Bob Davidson.

We owe many thanks and a great debt of gratitude to each of our volunteers, and donors, who help make our New Tracks Modeling shows and activities possible. These volunteers provide all the production capabilities, develop, and maintain our website, handle our communication needs, help pay our out-of-pocket costs, contribute to our Scholarship program, and carry out all the various other jobs that allows New Tracks Modeling to function and grow. I want to personally thank each and every one of you.

And yes, we need more volunteers to help those who are currently volunteering to make sure we have at least two people for each job, as well as volunteers for new activities we are planning.

What is planned for New Tracks Modeling in 2025?

As you know, I am passing along to the next generation of New Tracks Modeling leaders the continuation of much of our workload.

Starting January 1, 2025, Tom Farrell, Phil Edholm Bob Davidson, Martin Breckbiel MMR, and Jim Allen are all taking a much greater role in the management and future development of New Tracks Modeling Zoom and YouTube shows, YouTube videos, our newsletter, Facebook group, website, and Scholarship.

I plan to concentrate my attention on writing articles and looking to the future for New Tracks Modeling opportunities to promote our great hobby of model railroading, mentoring in our hobby, getting more modelers building more models, and helping wherever I am needed. Also, I plan to do more modeling.

Naturally, we all want New Tracks Modeling to continue to grow. To do that, we need your help to know what you want New Tracks Modeling to continue to do and what we are not doing that you want us to start. Please tell us.

Thanks again for all your past support. Please continue your support for New Tracks Modeling and to our new team of leaders. Now let's have fun in 2025 and help each other build some great model railroading pieces of ART and have fun running our railroad empires. You can always reach me, and I love to hear from you, at jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

Here is the link to my live discussion of the wrap-up for 2024 on the December 18, 2024, Zoom show.
<https://youtu.be/P5ZnU8tjNKM?si=5u7iIZYlzkdcP4gb>

and Bob Davidson's wrap up of the 2024 Scholarship program:
<https://youtu.be/-DbExp-0Svo?si=6HG8CD7BBqcBdqI8>

O Scale Central Update

In a previous *O Scale Resource* magazine, I wrote about the **O Scale Central (OSC)** which is the DBA name for the O Scale Kings.

Why did I change the title of this article from “New Tracks Modeling” to “New Tracks”

My reason is: I do not want to change the original look of the New Tracks brand. When I stepped back from being involved in all facets of my New Tracks Modeling brand, I wanted to give the volunteers I had asked to provide the leadership to various parts of New Tracks Modeling the freedom to make the changes they felt were needed to make their parts of New Tracks Modeling grow and develop.

One of those leaders believed change was needed in the logo from the one I had started with and used for everything. Some of you long term readers may remember I originally started this series with the logo “New Tracks” as shown on this article. When I added the weekly Zoom shows and was told we needed to add a website for marketing purposes I had to change the name to New Tracks Modeling as New Tracks was not available as a website name we could use. So I added Modeling to the title and kept the rest of the logo.

Now, in order to give the new leaders of the various parts of my New Tracks brand all the freedom they feel they need to make changes, I decided to return to using my original brand name and logo with the understanding that it is the overall brand that encompasses all the other various New Tracks Modeling parts. After all it’s what I started with all those years ago.

I hope everyone understands why I am making this change. In the future, there may be other parts of New Tracks I create with slightly different New Tracks names, but all of them will fall under the New Tracks brand. Your comments are always welcome. My email is jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

What does mentoring give to the mentor and person being mentored?

By now, I hope everyone knows that New Tracks is built on volunteers who mentor fellow modelers to help them improve their skills and build more models.

You might understand what a modeler gains from being mentored — but what about the mentor? What’s in it for him? Can you sum it up in just a sentence or two?

I recently came across an insightful article on Global English Editing by Farley Ledgerwood that, I believe, answers this very question. He writes:

“Volunteering keeps you 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.”

That’s what the mentor gets from mentoring. The reward of seeing someone you’ve helped proudly say, “I built that! Thank you for your help.” Their gratitude can be worth its weight in gold.

Mentoring is a win-win for both the mentor and the modeler receiving guidance. If you’ve had a mentoring experience, whether as a mentor or a person being mentored, I’d love to hear your story! I’m working on an article about "Mentoring Experiences" and would love to include your insights. Please share your thoughts with me at jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com. Thanks in advance for your help!

Recognizing our New Tracks Mentors (NTM)

For some time now, I’ve wanted to create a special recognition award for New Tracks Mentors (NTM), and I believe the time has come to proudly announce it. This award is dedicated to modelers who not only showcase their craftsmanship but also contribute to the model railroading community by mentoring others.

To qualify for the NTM Award, an individual must meet the following criteria:

1. Share their knowledge: Either by giving a model-building presentation on our New Tracks Modeling Zoom show or being profiled in my New Tracks articles in *The O Scale Resource* or the previously published *S Scale Resource* magazines.
2. Be a Mentor: Willingly guide and help less experienced modelers in our community.

While NMRA Achievement Program participants are eligible, this award is open to anyone, regardless of other recognition. My own mentor, for example, had no formal awards beyond being a highly skilled model builder and teacher, with his HO-scale layout featured in *Model Railroader* magazine.

This initiative is about more than just honoring talent. It's about recognizing those who believe in the importance of mentorship and fostering the future of our great model railroading hobby. We want to celebrate the model builders who:

- Have modeling abilities and skills,
- Want to share their talent and knowledge,
- Are willing to mentor others, and
- Support New Tracks' mission of keeping the art of model building alive.

We will have a New Tracks Mentor (NTM) page on our website, listing NTM honorees along with their email contact information. This will allow fellow modelers to learn more about each mentor by:

- Viewing their profiles and modeling work in my *O Scale Resource* or *S Scale Resource* online magazine articles.
- Watching their New Tracks Modeling Zoom presentations.

By providing direct access to experienced modelers, we hope to encourage more model-building and mentoring within our hobby.

Additionally, we will publish a monthly listing of new NTMs, complete with links to either their Zoom show videos or *O Scale Resource* magazine profiles in our Observations newsletter.

I would be honored if you share in my enthusiasm for this initiative. I welcome your thoughts and feedback on the NTM Award, and I encourage you to reach out to me at jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

Together, let's build a stronger, more connected model railroading community. Jim Kellow, MMR, NTM.

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I encourage all O Scale modelers to share your views of my article either with me or one of the officers and directors of the OSC. After all, the future of the OSC is up to you, the modelers in the O Scale community. Therefore, your opinions about, and suggestions for, the organization are very important. Need I say, "Pretty Please" as my mom tried to instill in me'.

This next modeler lives in my County in Florida, and reads my articles in the local newspaper. On December 8, 2023 one of my articles caused him to write me this email. After you read his initial email to me, please read about his modeling in his Profile.



Don Wilde

Don's Initial Email to me: Dad was a Depression baby, born in 1927. He was in active service in the Army Signal Corps in the immediate post-WW2 period, working on RADAR installations. He went to work for RCA and worked on the first nuclear-powered communications satellite (SNAP-2, now well documented on line though I never heard anything about it from him except the name) as well as manufacturing assembly line equipment for building color TV tubes. He ended his active engineering career at Los Alamos Labs! He was an active model airplane builder (U-control and then R/C) and model train builder all his life.

I came along in 1956 as the first of his children. When I was old enough to speak, our basement half-full of HO trains (the other half was filled with a very complete set of tools) -- and, for me, more importantly, his collection of *MR* and *RMC* magazines -- captivated my attention and interest. He loved to build kits, and he had a number of locomotives and cars from Roundhouse and Mantua and Ulrich that he built from kits. I'm not a very successful builder ("ten thumbs"), but I am still determinedly working on that. I strongly argue that the idea of assembling a kit (and I don't mean "shake the box") is essential to our children's growth as it was and is for me.

There's a more important benefit that model railroading has had for me. Railroads (and MRR) are 'systems of systems (including people)'. That is a fundamental principle of engineering and I owe my deep understanding of it to model railroading and the thoughtful articles in the collection of *Model Railroader* magazines Dad accumulated! Another aspect of scale modeling is that our models are representations (however imperfect) of



Dad's first HO layout in Madison, NJ.

He was mighty proud of his first brass loco, a PFM/United AT&SF Consolidation he bought for \$49.95.

Trestle was scratchbuilt for specific location on Madison HO layout. Picture by Dale Wild

things from the real world. That's where the magazines come in. Model railroad magazines talk "about" scale modeling. The ideas of "representation" and "modeling" are crucial to modern object-oriented software engineering, and that kick-started my career (now 40 years) as an embedded systems and Internet of Things coder. I am very bright, and my career has included systems installed in the Pentagon and White House that I developed both hardware and firmware for.

I'm now 67, and I owe these things and also my creativity mostly to model railroading and the mags! I am far more creative than Dad was. He was a very competent engineer, but not very creative in the artistic and imagination sense.

He was a craftsman in the engineering and tool-using sense, and that was sufficient for him.

My final point for the day is that much of that differential between my Dad and myself is due to the fact that I grew up with these concepts from my early days, and they impacted me strongly almost from Day 1.



As a member of RCA's technical staff, Dad was quite well paid for the day. This HO railroad took up half of our basement in Madison, NJ, and many of the other engineers also built HO train layouts so this was the core of our family's social life. They also played Bridge with local non-RCA neighbors.



I convinced Dad to try O scale late in his stay in Santa Fe. He built a twice-around Ow5 layout in Santa Fe with Westcott's TAT-IV electronics, but his interests were straying back to his original pre-RCA hobby of U-control and R/C aircraft.



Dad's much later HO/HOn3 layout in Santa Fe, NM, late 1990s. Had automated CTI control system on HO single track with sidings main line (lowest track in picture)

Picture by Dale; he was a serious photography buff and took many pictures using a tripod and delay timer.



My first layout, 1960 (age 4), in basement in Madison, NJ. He helped me add a single freight siding to it, but I don't have a picture of that. Dad took this picture.

Dad grew up with craftsmanship and studied electronics design; I'm a mostly self-taught software engineer who grew up with higher order concepts of thinking about things.

Model railroading is a critical tool for kids today to gain skills in both fabrication and design thinking without spending huge amounts of money. I'm active in the PSR/AZDIV of NMRA leadership, and I'm looking for ways I can leverage that by more volunteering to help kids grow up smarter so we can get to star ships sooner rather than later!

Hope this stimulates more interesting and impactful articles from you! I love the fact that your modeling is far different than diesels and unit trains. I also model an earlier era; my Baltimore and Pennsylvania is set in 1897, when the country was taking pride in enameled and polished brass steam locomotives and talking about the coming Turn of the Century!

Don Wilde's Modeling

As a modeler, my nickname should be “Ten Thumbs.” I’ve been model railroading since I was about four, thanks to my Dad who was a BSEE engineer at RCA who worked with the mechanical engineers to make tooling and machinery for making the color tube of early color TVs.

I had a simple loop-and-a-siding layout with a die-cast Mantua Sharknose, an Athearn GP, and a dozen RTR cars. Half the basement in our Madison, NJ house was full of Dad’s HO, and the other half was his workshop and tools. I was occasionally allowed to run a train on his layout, and to my credit, I never once mixed up my HO slot car driving habits with any of the train operations.

More than that, though, Dad’s gift to me was two heavy file cabinets full of *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman* magazines. It’s safe to say that I learned to read so I could read those MRs! The color TV set often went unwatched (until after my bedtime) except for cartoons and early AFL/NFL football, and I filled thick notebooks with track plans carefully drawn with a dime store compass and ruler. By twelve, I’d migrated from HO to N scale and was building an 8’ x 9’ N-scale layout with dual reversing loops (correctly wired) and two-train DC block control. My equipment roster was pretty eclectic, based on what was available from Con-Cor, Atlas and MRC. My pride and joy was an MRC Nickel Plate Berkshire, an exquisite model for the time, and I had an MRC Controlmaster V as my #1 control system. Dad, ever the engineer, built Linn Westcott’s TAT-III and TAT-IV from individual parts, and built a larger twice-around HO (and then another in Ow5) system in a newer house he and Mom had custom-built in more-rural New Jersey.

My Mom was kind enough to regularly drive me to the Morris County Model Railroad Club, where I was able to test out my blooming knowledge of “operations.” I’m proud to say I never broke anything (there, at least), and they were happy to have me join in.

I’ve modeled off and on through the years as I built my career, but for the most part my ‘pikes’ were imagineered, not built. After college I took a sharp detour from my parents’ expectations and partnered with a Viet Nam-era Ranger vet to tackle Hollywood. We wrote five scripts, and I made the money to support us by teaching myself to code for good bucks, but my big bad Ranger buddy wasn’t up for taking on the producers and actually selling the scripts, so we never were able to follow through on that venture.

So, what does that put me up to, today? I’m active in the leadership of the NMRA PSR/AZDIV, and I enjoy the gratification of contribution. For a number of years, when I worked at Intel, I mentored an after-school club of Native American middle school kids in finessing their LEGO Mindstorms robots for maximum performance, and one year I had the honor of being selected as the Head Robot Judge for the AZ State Championships.

Over the last several years, I’ve put a lot of thought and work into my company, seed Things LLC. I’ve been putting a lot of work over the last three years into two product lines: Real World Computing™ and the Enable.AITM AI-as-a-Service system. The first is designed for endpoint systems and device control (making Things go “bump in the night,” so to speak) for the Internet of Things, and the second will become both the core of an open source AI server system and the heart of my specific AI-as-a-Service server application.

Scale and Gauge? Subject to change at any moment! Seriously, I donated all of the Ow5 stuff to the NMRA Convention committee last year as that was just too many adventures to deal with. I do have my limits and one of them is that I do still intend to have a life outside of model railroading... “Real Soon Now” as Jerry Pournelle, the Sci-Fi writer used to say.

I’m currently working on two layouts actively, and have a third diorama firmly in mind. Here goes!

The CliShay Knot & Ore Company

The CliShay is a logging and mining road set in California somewhere near King’s Canyon in the early 1920s.

It's built in On30, and I have Climax and Shay locomotives for it, both by Bachmann. Both are currently DC, but will be DCC, and I intend to equip my control PCs with Sound Blaster cards for realistic Shay and Climax sound effects piped under computer control to speakers recessed into the shelving under the layout sections.



The foundation of the layout is four shelves of a five-shelf 2' x 3' plastic shelf unit, with the fifth shelf separated and hung from the ceiling for a valance and lighting mounts. The base shelf at ground level is intended for storage, with three trackage levels above. Each level's scenery and railroad equipment is designed to be fabricated on wood and foam structures that can be removed separately for construction work on the bench. The eventual goal is to make all of these structural pieces transportable for occasional show visits. Given that this is 1:48 scale, that's several trucks' worth of layout, scenery, structures, electronics and trains, but that's the intention and the plan!

Connecting the layers is a unique new invention of mine called the Turn-Table-Vator™, a prototype device that allows me to make use of my career's education to make something that can become a specialty product for model railroaders. It's a 36" train-length turntable on a chassis that can smoothly lift a train from the lowest to the highest level under computer control. Making it commercially available is not a priority for me, but I expect that I can find somebody who makes MRR products a priority to commercialize it. Certainly it's worth an article, as more and more model railroaders have constrained spaces in which to work.

The theme of the railroad is a determined company working hard to succeed, but all the lumber seems to end up going into shoring up the ore mine, which never seems to come up with a single glittering anything to be worth selling!

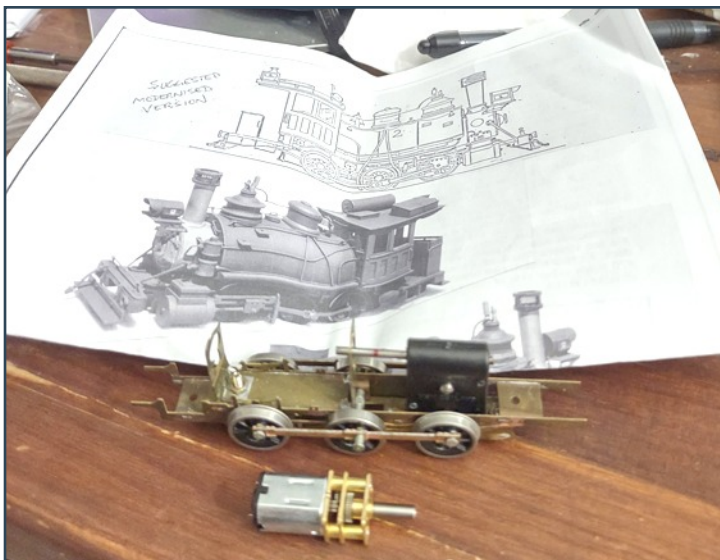
I want to play with model railroading with this pike, but I want the fun to be subtle enough that it doesn't hit visitors over the head like a certain well-known early modeler's "Car Inspectors" on his narrow gauge line. He could get away with that back then, but that was half a century earlier in model railroading!

I'm not going to worry about scratch building much of anything here; since On30 is not a very common prototypical scale I have no issues with rivet counting or ready-to-run and kitbashed equipment here. Pure fun is the objective!

Baltimore & Pennsylvania Rail Road Company/Brouse Excellent Steam Tractor Company

Set in 1897, the BALTo. & PENNa. is a 36" gauge Class One steam railroad. In those days, many railroads in the area started out designed as narrow gauge. This freelance line chose to stay that way, and I model it in Sn3. It's designed to represent a town that fronts the Cheseapeake Bay in Maryland. One half plus a staging yard in a closet represents the main line heading into Maryland and north towards New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Besides the industries in the town, a whole chunk of the layout will represent the BESTco., a steam traction engine manufacturer. One prominent feature on the main line will be a model Bollmann Truss bridge, a fascinating design from a B & O prototype built completely in cast and wrought iron. Another important feature is the use of behind-the-scenes 'traversers' to allow, for example, empty flatcars to be replaced with flatcars loaded with Colin Chapman's Fine Carriages. A similar sleight-of-hand traverser backs up the Bay side of the harbor freight house and connects it with an off-scene interchange track. Proper use of empties and loads will be a key operating feature of the layout!

The era chosen, besides preparations for the the upcoming Turn of the Century celebrations, allows me to celebrate the days of brightly enameled locomotives glittering with highly polished brasswork, and passenger cars glistening with varnish and pinstripes. Even the lowly switch engines will have elaborate lettering!



My Railmaster Exports Sn3 0-6-0ST, modeled on a RGS/D&RG prototype, to be the first Sn3 locomotive on BALTo. & PENNa.

I bought this directly from John, and decided to build it first before tackling the Consolidation. I had John send me a bag of backdating parts for both locomotives, as the Bo & Pa is set in 1897.

In process of being re-motored with Chinese gearmotor with maximum RPM of 200. This locomotive will CRAWL!

This is intended to be my ‘serious’ railroad. It’s primarily built on a pair of 18” x 96” open frame sections, and it really won’t bother me if I have to rebuild a section ten times to get things right to my satisfaction! By the time I complete this model railroad, I intend to have learned enough techniques – and patience – to earn my NMRA Master Model Railroader® certificates. I’m currently remotoring my first (of two) Railmaster Exports 0-6-0ST switchers with a 200 RPM gearmotor for a much better crawl speed. I intend to complete these with DCC, but, like the On30, my intent is for the sound to be sourced from normal sized audio speakers that track the train as it travels the line. My opinion is that, while sound-equipped DCC locomotives are simply amazing as technology, real steam locomotives shake the Earth as they pass by!

Textures are important to me, and another feature of the era and locale is the different building materials used along the line, and this is an important way to show that some of these businesses have been providing wares for generations. My space is definitely limited, but I have been inspired by what the UK modelers in the Facebook Micro Layouts group accomplish in much smaller spaces, as well as the work of Carl Arendt (<https://www.carendt.com/>) and the American-origin Micro/Small.



Dad and Mom took a wedding anniversary trip to Australia and New Zealand, and Dad came back with a Railmaster 2-8-0. When he died I inherited it (unbuilt), which sealed my fate as a wannabe Sn3 modeler.

Wanting to model pre-1900, I asked John Agnew (owner of RE) to send me a set of backdating parts for this 1920s Consolidation.

My goal is to end up with this Consolidation, two 0-6-0STs (one for Bo. & Pa., the other for the BEST Co. Traction Engine factory, a 4-4-0 or two for passenger service, and a scratch-built steam railcar.

The Coronado Rail Road

It turns out that, in 1:32 scale ($3/8" = 1' 0"$) HO gauge represents 21" gauge. The Coronado, a 20" gauge line that burst across eastern Arizona in the 1880s and connected with 36" and standard gauge lines to pull copper ore out of the earth and smelt it into pure copper metal for use in the exploding electrical industry.

I have an On30 Bachmann 2-4-4T Forney locomotive that will be an ideal source for kitbashing an authentic model of CRR's "Copperhead", which is on static display in Clifton, Arizona, once the home of the Arizona Copper Company smelter. Several of the other small Bachmann steamers are ripe for similar conversions.

I've been working with the Curator of the Arizona Mining, Minerals, and Natural Resource Education Museum in Phoenix as she builds a staff and prepares for its re-opening next year. I've been doing my best to find a home and busy hands for a bunch of our AZDIV MMR® crew, currently working out of the AZ Capitol Museum around the corner.

My intention is to build a simple static shadow-box display of the base of the Coronado's namesake incline with the Forney. That one cable-driven incline, 3000' in length, led to a spectacular aerial tramway that led to a deep shaft copper mine way up in the hills. My hope is that sharing my completed display will spark more interest in the Museum's board of directors.

Very little is left of the prototype. If you get way off the beaten track, you can spot the notch at the top of what was the Coronado Incline, but most of the rest of the Coronado and its larger gauge connecting lines disappeared when the open pit copper mine at Morenci opened and flooded it out of existence.

Thanks Don for your help and interest. Don can be reached at: Don.Wilde@newtracksmodeling.com.

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You have read the profiles of many modelers in my articles, and you asked me to do my own profile. Well, here it is.

Jim Kellow MMR

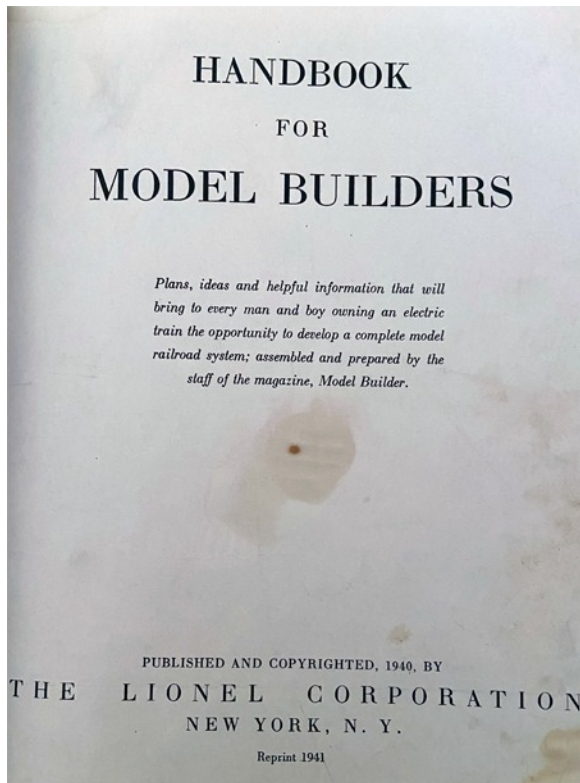
I started modeling and became a model railroader as far back as I can remember. I had help with acquiring trains, setting up layouts and helping learn how to use basic modeling tools, from my Dad, Uncle and Granddad. I was truly a lucky kid.

Many of my early model building kits were stick and tissue paper model airplanes that my Dad gave me.

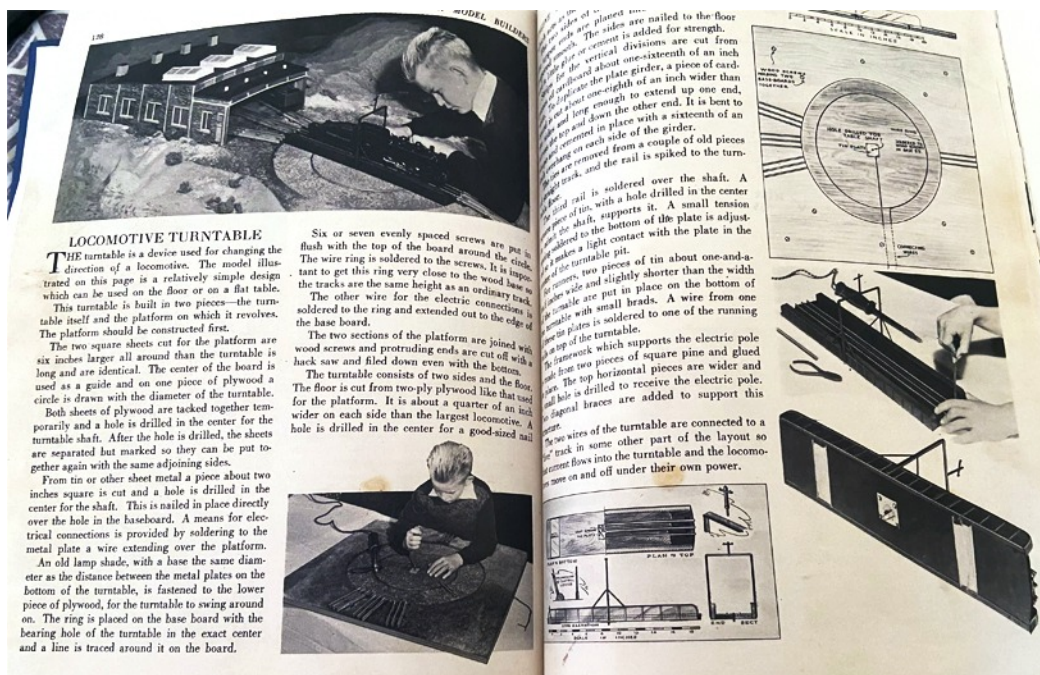
After I built them, he took them to display in his store to help sell the kits. Later model cars, ships, control line and radio control airplanes, rubber band powered airplanes, slot cars, soldier collecting, were all hobbies I tried. But as you will see, I never really got model railroading out of my system.

I have modeled in N, HO, O Hi-rail and 2-rail O scale. Today I am an O scale 2-rail overhead scale traction modeler of the 1920/30s time frame. My overhead is my common connection for my DC operation. I started the current layout about 20 years ago. It could have been considered completed some years ago. But in reality, it will never be finished. Why? because I am a railroad modeler, not a regular operator of a model railroad. Yes, this requires shelving around the layout as a place to store excess built models that I cannot fit somewhere on the layout.

In addition to my modeling, I currently write a "New Tracks Modeling" series of articles for *The O Scale Resource*, a monthly column for my local *Citrus County Florida Chronicle* newspaper, and our monthly *New Tracks Modeling Observations Newsletter*. Plus I host weekly Zoom Shows on Wednesdays at 7pm Eastern Time called "New Tracks Modeling". We have over 1400 videos of our shows, and segments of our shows, on our YouTube channel New Tracks Modeling.

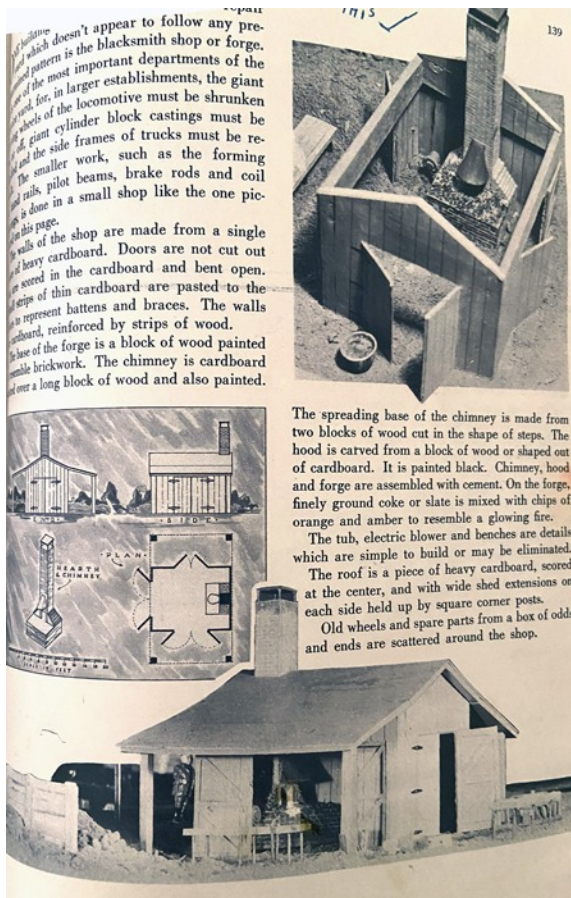


My first model railroad book. Published 1941. I am 2 years old.



Please visit and subscribe to our website NewTracksModeling.com and our YouTube channel New Tracks Modeling. To keep up to date with my future modeling and "New Tracks Modeling" plans please follow our Facebook group page, New Tracks Modeling and/or my personal Facebook page: Jim Kellow MMR.

Pages from first book. Notice number of rails in photo. Modeling is modeling!



I always wanted to build this from my first model railroad book.



When I was editor of LCCA. Nancy sewed one to my hat with a small patch that said editor on it.



Good By Grad School. World here I come. Drawing by a friend.

You can also see an interview I did 3 or 4 years ago which was conducted by an Australian modeler on his podcast: Model Railroad Techniques. Click here to view.

https://youtu.be/dnnVs8jFdZc?si=FsrQ3voXg9_AVUt_

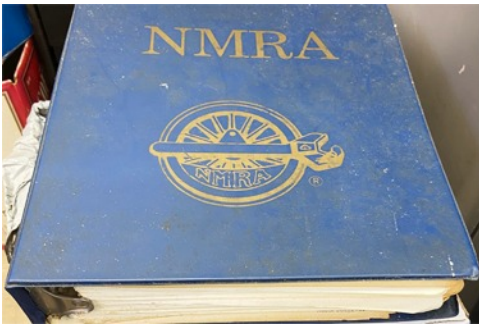
I have very fond memories of building and operating all of my various model railroads over the years. Some operated using hand made controllers, a hand made fast clock and an operating time schedule. Some I just turned on the power and watched them go. All of my railroads have been freelance and I have loved every one, at least until I built the next one. Moving around the Country naturally required new layouts periodically.

As I aged, I discovered I enjoyed model building more than operation. The main reason for this is I hate track and especially overhead wire cleaning. Today, I seldom run my railroad and then only to see if a motive power model I have scratchbuilt actually operates.

I am currently in my mid 80s and my real enjoyment comes from creating and building a model and encouraging other modelers in their modeling efforts through my "New Tracks Modeling" articles, Zoom, and YouTube Shows and occasionally, if they drop by, in person.



Lionel Stage



My Big Blue Book. Use it a lot.

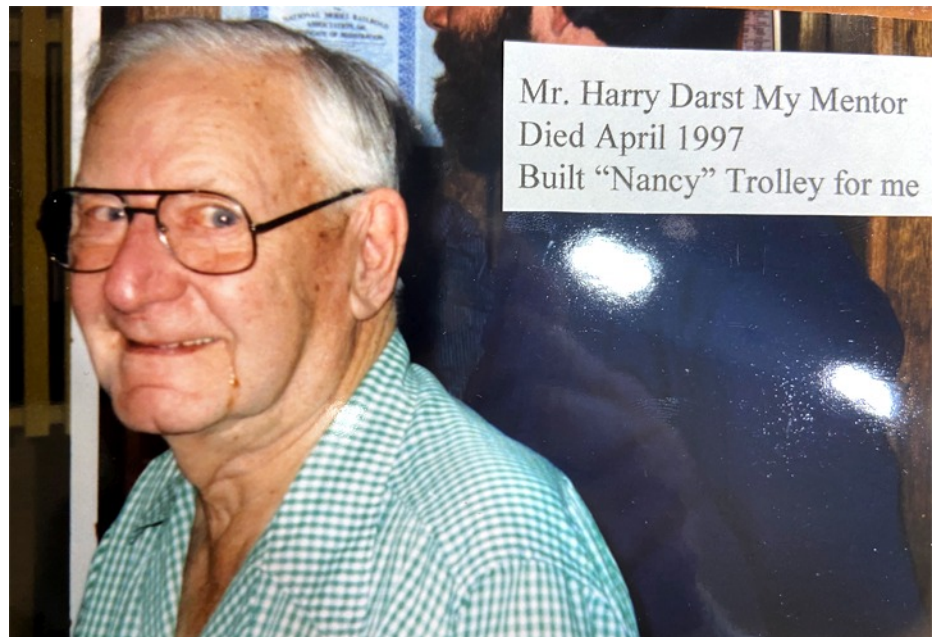
I have gone through various phases of model Railroading to get to where I am today. Haven't we all? Let me explain.

My Model Railroad phases

Stage 1. I started as a kid wanting a Lionel empire. I Loved those Lionel catalogs and Department Store Christmas layouts. My Uncle had a Lionel layout, all Pre-War, in my Granddad's basement, which fascinated me. It was one of the first layouts I had not built that I got to operate. Many years later, I inherited those trains which started my Pre-War Lionel collection. My first layout my Dad helped me build rolled under my bed when not in use, but at least it was a permanent layout. I had arrived, I was a real model railroader. I built a lot of structures using card, scrap and whatever I could find that would work. My scratch building career was started during this time. I learned a lot about the hobby and modeling from the older fellows I met at my local model railroad hobby shop. I did not know there were clubs, magazines or associations for model railroaders. I was a loner and I assumed so were all model railroaders.



Ronnie Rise MMR in his shop.



Mr. Harry Darst My Mentor
Died April 1997
Built "Nancy" Trolley for me

My friend and Mentor. Miss him every day.



"NANCY"
Interurban built in 1992
by
Harry Darst

Nancy car scratchbuilt in brass by my Mentor Harry Darst.

“MMR”

by James Kellow, MMR 202

I started work on meeting the NMRA requirements for the Master Model Railroader (MMR) designation in 1990. On June 27, 1993, I had the final judging that completed my seventh certification area and qualified me for the MMR award. As I write this I am scheduled to be presented with the award at the NMRA National Convention on Aug. 6, 1993, in Valley Forge, Pa.

Was the effort worth it? What does “MMR” really mean?

The answer for “was it worth it?” is definitely yes. The effort made me a much better modeler. It made me get involved in facets of the hobby and learn about the prototype we model in ways that I previously had not even thought about. I learned construction methods and techniques as well as the use of various materials to simulate prototype construction. I learned about electrical applications that previously I had only heard about. I learned a little about architecture and building construction, plumbing and interior detailing of structures. I experienced that fear of entering, and later the thrill of winning, model contest. I met and had help from a lot of people, both members and non-members of the NMRA. I joined the first model railroad club I have ever belonged to and also built a completely new layout in O scale traction. I acquired the confidence to believe that I am capable of building any project I want and that it will be a very good model. I learned some metal working skills, soldering, and the use of a lathe, drill press and a milling machine.


I still consider myself a beginner, but my O scale all-brass, scratchbuilt trolleys won first place in the 1992 O Scale Convention and the Vane A. Jones Best of Trolleys award at the 1993 O Scale Convention. In addition I was recently asked to scratch-build several models for other modelers. This was a big boost to my ego. I also learned how to write articles, and as a result have a column on scratch-building which appears in the *48FT./“O” Scale News Magazine* and I am discussing a book with one of the hobby publishers.

As I now look back over the last several years, I remember both the frustrations and thrills of the achievement program. For me it has been very rewarding and I very strongly recommend it to

modelers who are interested in scratchbuilding and learning the prototype. I guarantee that at the very minimum it will make you a much better modeler and have you meet a lot of NMRA people who will go out of their way to help you.

What does being an MMR mean? At this point I would say it is a first step in my continuing modeling education. I only completed the requirements yesterday, and frankly after the thrill and satisfaction of the achievement, I don't feel any different. I owe a great debt of thanks to several NMRA members and Achievement Program officials, without whose help I would never have finished the program. I found out how much the Achievement Program officials were there to help and how devoted they are to the success of the program. I also found out first hand that “anyone” can be successful in achieving the MMR. It is not a program for a select few and it does not require that every model you build be of contest-winning quality at the NMRA National Convention. It does require an honest effort to educate yourself about the prototype and to strive for excellence in your modeling projects. I found that a significant part of the program involves self education and independent research about the prototype being modeled as well as development of your written communication skills. I guess in a nutshell I would say that having achieved the MMR you are a more educated, resourceful, careful, confident, articulate modeler of a prototype railroader.

If I had it to do over again the only thing I would change is the amount of time I spent completing the achievement categories. I would slow down and enjoy it more. I found as I got closer to my goal, I was spending more time to complete it. This detracted from time with my family and other interests. In fairness, this was a mistake.

So to me the MMR award is a major step in my continuing education about our hobby. It is a program that I believe any modeler has the skill to achieve. It is also a program that requires effort on the part of the modeler to complete. I am convinced any modeler will agree the effort is well worth the reward. As one television commercial used to say it, “Try it, you'll like it.” Best of luck. 

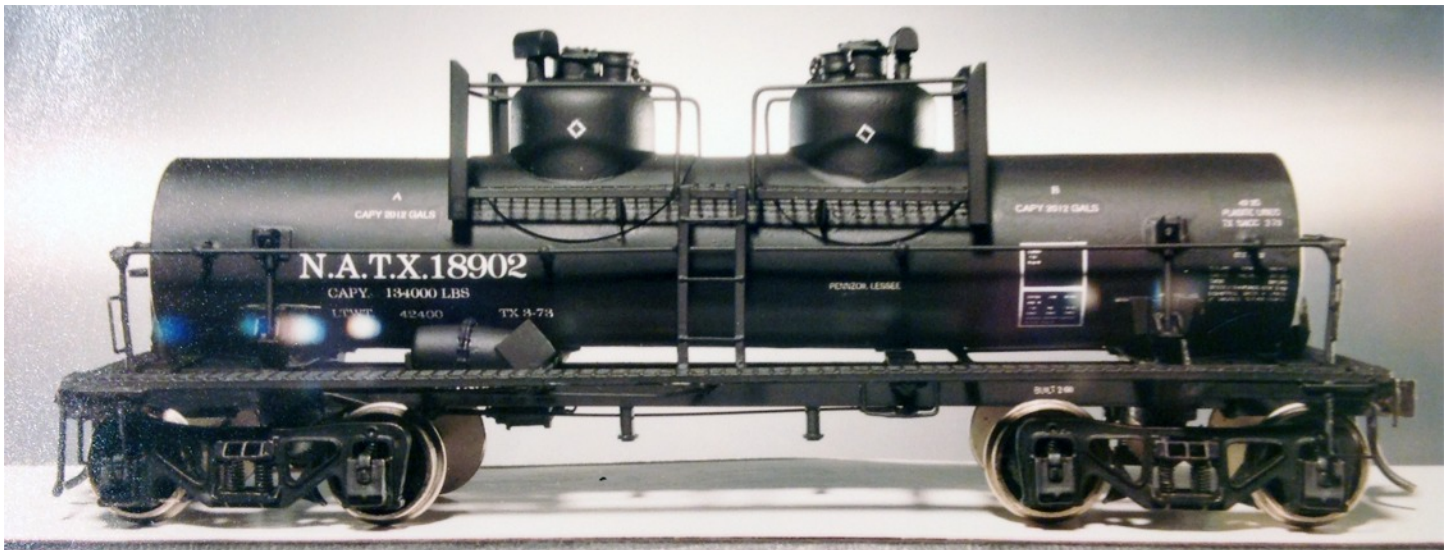
I wrote this one day after getting my MMR, and sent it to Rick Shoup MMR as a way of saying thanks. He sent it to the *NMRA* magazine and they published it. Surprise for me.

Stage 2. I got a hardcover book published by Lionel sometime in the early 1940s which made me want a more scale appearance on my railroad and to be able to run longer trains. So I packed up my Lionel and built both HO and N layouts during this stage. While I put Lionel away, I still read those Lionel catalogs and visited that same hobby shop.

Life in the way of my first automobile, girls, military service in the Air Force, college, grad school for a MA in Economics and Finance, starting a career, and marriage, all got in the way of my serious modeling and my model railroad development.

However, I did build some models during this time that I hoped would be used on future layouts. I also sat in my easy chair and read every issue of *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman* magazine I could find.

Stage 3. Stability in my career and family life, a new home with a basement sent me back to my youth, and first love, Lionel. I built a large basement Lionel Hi-Rail layout. I joined all the relevant model railroad associations, TCA, LCCA, LOTS, TTOS and NMRA and subscribed to every model railroad publication I could find. I had a little spare money and time and I was all in as a model railroader. Some would say I was starting to live a dream.



Scratchbuilt in brass O Scale First Place contest. winner. Received over 100 points.



Scratchbuilt in brass.

Also, I started collecting all the prewar, and postwar Lionel I had wanted as a kid, but did not get back then. Twice a year, I took a trip to the TCA York Pennsylvania meet combined with weekly visits to my local hobby shop and most weekends to a local model train show. My son and I started a tradition of having a Saturday morning “Diner” breakfast and attending a train show after taking a trip to the local radio control airfield to watch the airplanes and talk with the modelers. My son got to know many of the train show vendors, and we often helped them set up their displays. These were very special times Saturdays.



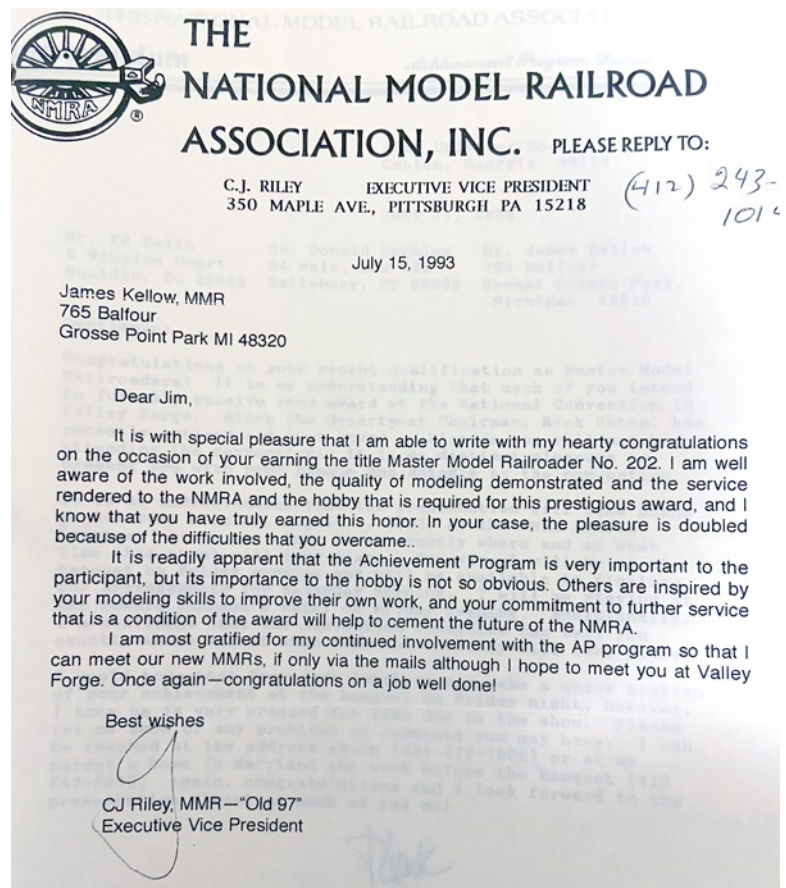
*Plaque I received from NMRA
National AP Chairman.*



My MMR Plaque.

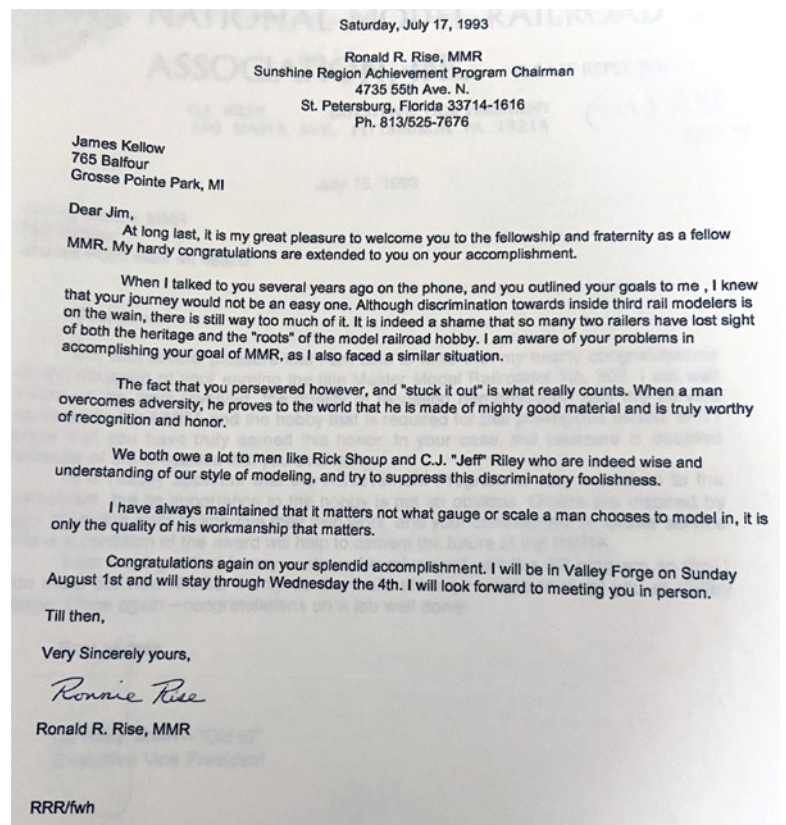
Stage 4. Now I had an extensive operating Lionel layout and was a member of the NMRA so I decided I had enough experience as a model railroader to qualify for the Achievement Programs's Master Model Railroader (MMR) award. Surprise! The local NMRA representatives who visited my home, laughed and explained that I had a lot of work ahead of me to earn any NMRA award. OK back to square one.

Frankly, after the NMRA members visited my layout, I felt that there was no way I would ever be accepted as a serious model railroader, let alone a MMR candidate. But I decided to start



*Above: He actually awarded me the award at the
next convention.*

Below: This CB letter from Ronnie meant a lot.





It was my honor to be able to help Mal get his MMR. This was taken in his shop which was across the street from P&D Hobby Shop, which I visited at least weekly. I forget but one of Mal's cars got all but 1 point of getting a perfect contest score at a NMRA National Convention. It was a beautiful model which was kept in the P&D owner's private office.



William and his Dad, Patrick, checking out the interior of Williams personal railroad car.

working on the Achievement Program (AP) Certificates anyway, at night, on weekends, and in any other spare time I had. Two years later I was awarded my MMR #202 Certificate. My MMR journey provided me with the modeling and political knowledge to later help other modelers over bumps in their road to becoming an MMR.

While it was over 33 years ago, I still remember the day I qualified for the MMR award as if it were yesterday. I joined the NMRA as a Life member two hours after being presented the MMR award. The next day, I wrote an article about my journey to the MMR that was published in the monthly *NMRA Bulletin* magazine. More about this later. I truly believe the NMRA Achievement Program made me a better model railroader and is the best educational program for modelers in the world. I encourage everyone to investigate the program. I also encourage you to have a MMR mentor to advise you along the way. Yes Sir, mentoring help from an experienced person in navigating the program is a definite help.

During my NMRA adventure, I met Harry Darst, a fantastic HO modeler, who taught me how to build in brass and overall become a far better model builder. I would not have achieved my MMR without Harry's help and guidance.

Two other NMRA members who played a major role in my journey were Rick Shoup MMR and Ronnie Rise MMR. Rick Shoup was the National AP Chairman and his support was critical in my obtaining the award. Ronnie Rise was a Regional AP Chairman in the far away State of Florida that went out of his way to help and advise me during my journey. Unfortunately, all three are no longer with us. I miss these friends so very much every day. I truly hope the help I try to provide to other modelers lives up to their expectations of me. They set the bar for helping others very high.

I started my writing career in the model railroad press during this time. My articles were published in a variety of hobby publications including: *O Gauge Railroading*, *Traction and Trolleys Quarterly*, *Train Collectors Association (TCA) Quarterly*, *Toy Train Operating Society (TTOS)*, *National Association of Model Railroaders (NMRA) Bulletin*, *Lionel Collectors Club of America (LCCA)*, *Trolley Talk* magazine, *The S Scale* and *O Scale Resource* magazines, *The National*

Association of S Gaugers (NASG) magazine, the *O Scale Central (OSC)* magazine, and various NMRA Regional publications. I also served as the Editor of the *LCCA* magazine, and in the position of Contributing Editor of the "Singing Wire" traction column in *48 Ft/O Scale News Magazine*. All of a sudden, a funny thing happened, karma some would later say, I was appointed the NMRA Achievement Program Chairman for the NMRA North Central Region where I received my MMR. Surprise, surprise to me and for many of the region's

members I believe. A Lionel guy, an O scale traction guy, oh my, not exactly a mainstream HO model railroader. But I helped some modelers obtain their modeling goals and even two obtain their MMRs.

During this stage, in the 1980s early 1990s, I also entered my models in contests at National and Regional conventions and meetings. The decision to enter that first contest was really hard for me as I was concerned my model was just not good enough to compete. Frankly, I thought my model might even be laughed at based on some of my previous experience in my MMR journey!

It was at an annual O Scale Convention in Chicago, Illinois that my model won first place traction and I never had doubts about entering a contest after that. My models always won either first place in their category or best of show in every other contest I entered. These experiences helped me later when I served as a contest chairman in several NMRA regions, and is also why you hear me ask many guests on my “New Tracks Modeling” Zoom shows, “How do you know when your model is finished?” I have always had trouble answering that question. I am happy judges at the contests I entered were fair in seeing the quality of my modeling. These qualities were what I always looked for in the Contest judges I appointed.



Scratchbuilt in brass buggy except wheels. Doctor carries medical bag shovel, and shotgun. He can handle any emergency.

Stage 5. At this point I had an extensive Lionel operating layout, a significant collection of Lionel engines, cars, and accessories, as well as a mostly scratchbuilt O Scale Traction operating layout. Also I was having a great time helping people achieve their goals in the Achievement Program. I had gotten rid of all my N and HO.

I became much more involved with visiting layouts and studying prototypical operation. I joined the Detroit United Railway Traction club. I attended conventions, train shows, and met a lot of modelers who I learned from and got to visit a lot of great model railroads. I quickly learned that the MMR was not an ending point but only a forward step in my model railroad education. I still had a lot to learn, and the NMRA Achievement program was still there to help me.

I have been fortunate to find some modelers like John Allen who were absolutely outstanding modelers, but who were not interested in becoming MMRs. John was certainly offered, more than once, the option of getting the award, but he always turned it down. Frankly, as I got closer to completing the MMR requirements, I think I began to understand why modelers like John did not pursue the MMR award. He already had the education that becoming a MMR can provide.

He had already demonstrated his outstanding model railroading knowledge and capabilities which, in reality, far surpassed what many MMRs could duplicate.

This realization is why I think any talented modeler can be a mentor to other modelers. Mentoring does not require having been awarded 7 out of the 11 AP categories the NMRA MMR

My grandson's personal auto and railroad car. OK, he had to have reliable transportation to get to his Railroad car from home.



program requires, mentoring is more about passing a modeling “can do” attitude and a specific skill set from one modeler to another. All a mentor needs is demonstrated talented modeling skills and a willingness to help.

I certainly don’t believe my modeling is in the same class as John Allen, but I do believe it is far better than before I started participating in the NMRA Achievement Program. My advice to a reader of this article is if you want to improve your modeling skills and model railroading knowledge, either join the NMRA and participate in the Achievement Program, or find yourself a talented modeler who has demonstrated modeling skills you want to learn and ask him to become your mentor to learn his skills, or do both. That’s what I did.

My education after getting the MMR continued and broadened. I learned that modeling skills are not scale specific, but can be learned from and used in any scale or hi-rail situation. I also learned how important art techniques are in modeling. I still believe we do not discuss the importance of art enough in our modeling, and in creating scenes on our model railroads. Learning these lessons is why you have heard me repeatedly say “modeling is modeling”, and great modeling is being done by both scale and hi-rail modelers. I know this is true as I have benefited from help by both kinds of modelers. In fact, I have been both kinds of modeler.

Photography was another skill I discovered and started to learn and use in my modeling. It is so easy now using your cell phone to take a photograph of a model and immediately see errors in the model that need to be corrected; errors you did not see by just looking at it. For me, it became both an ongoing step during construction and a final step in examining my finished model.

If the photos look good, and the model looks like I achieved what I hoped I would when I started, then it is finished. At least for my needs. As you can tell, I am still working on defining what “finished” means. The closest I have come is to say: “Yep, that’s what I wanted it to look like.”.

Stage 6. Retirement and downsizing. I got rid of almost all my model railroading collection and layout through sale or donation. I only kept a few scratchbuilt models that had won Best of Show or significant awards such as the Van Jones Award for Traction, at a O Scale convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. The model that won that award was named after my son, Patrick, and he recently asked to have it. I am pleased he wanted to take it home with him.

Before I retired, I was thrilled and honored when the Detroit Institute of Art approached me to donate my models for display in their extensive model railroad collection. Me, well I was off to the golf courses in Virginia, where I quickly decided I was not at the Arnold Palmer level and needed to start building a new traction layout.

Then came my election in the NMRA MER Region as the Region’s Vice President and the appointments as the Region’s Achievement Program Chairman and Region’s Contest Chairman. I immediately joined the Region, as a life member as we never intended to move again. But naturally, life came along and we moved a few years later.

I loved talking with other modelers working on the NMRA Achievement Program Certificates and those who entered the contests. I felt I really understood their concerns and could give them the kind of assurance and help they needed to overcome any hesitation they had about participating and achieving their modeling goals. I also continued my political education in modeling organizations. Boy did I still have a lot to learn.

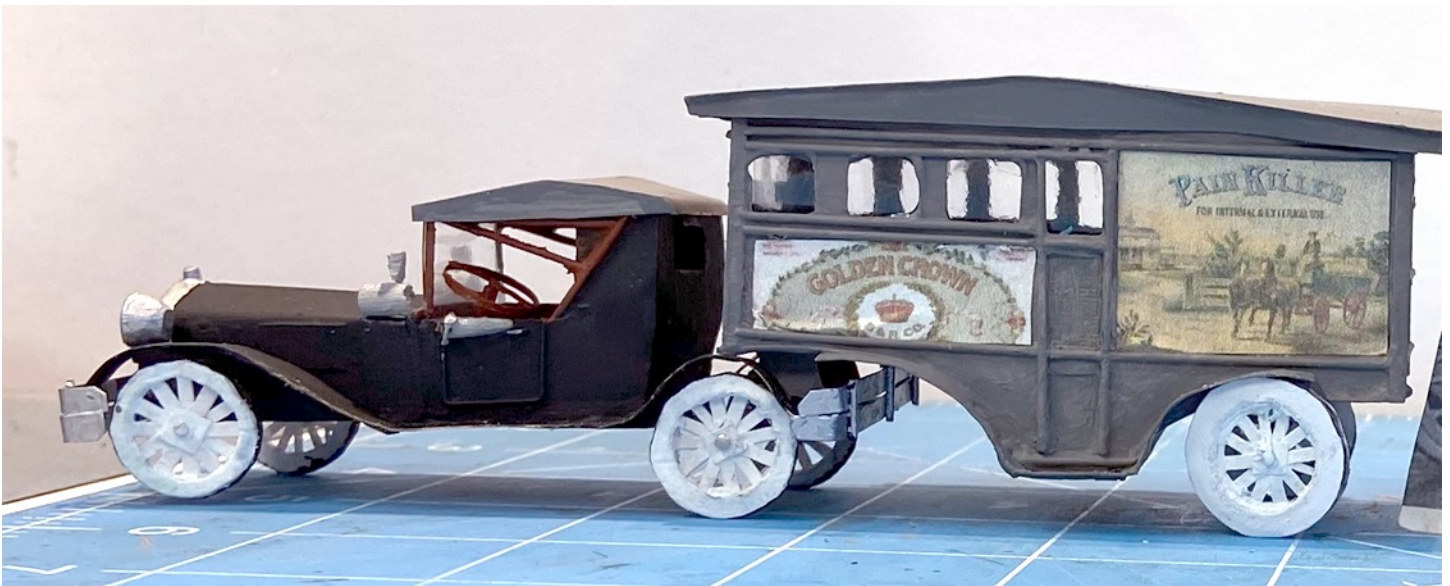
I also became a Lionel Ambassador for the Lionel Corporation as I was still a Lionel guy at heart, and hey, I was retired! I love Lionel, but lack of space meant no collection or layout. Also for a time, I was the Editor of the LCCA publication *The Lion Roars*. Then our son was off to college, and my mother-in-law needed help so we moved again. Hello Florida. We built a new house, never again, including a separate building, “The Train House”, as Nancy calls it.

Stage 7. Moved to Florida, and into the NMRA “Sunshine” Region. I again started building a new traction layout, but this time in my very own “Train House” building. For the first time, I had my own space separate

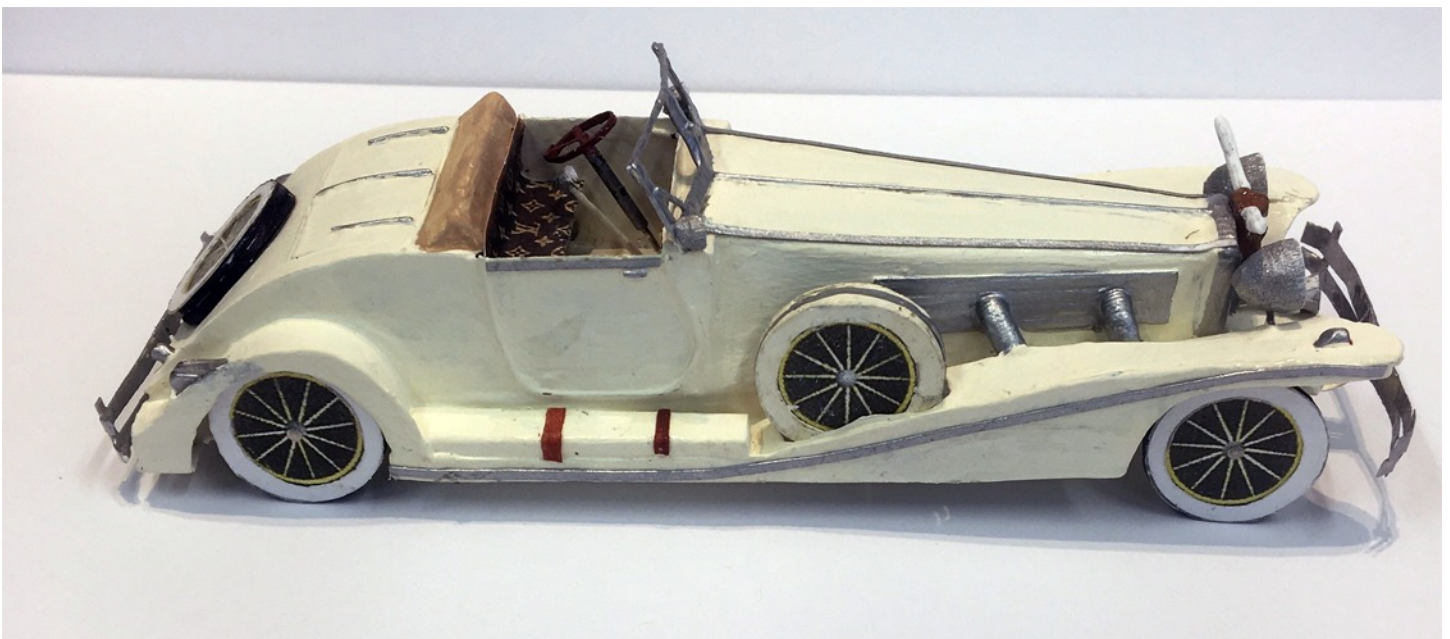
from our home. My wife tells her friends my separate space is the best investment we have ever made! I now had space for a reasonable sized traction layout and a shop/work area where I could get up each morning, grab my coffee, and go to work in my private world, write articles, meet friends, build models and operate my traction layout. I was retired, gotten golf and ocean cruises out of my system, and was living my model railroader's dream. I can not believe it has already been 20 years of dreaming and modeling and we haven't moved again!.

I again had become very active in the NMRA Sunshine Region and the local Western Division. I became the elected Division Superintendent and member of the Region's BOD, plus the appointed Region AP Chairman, and Region Contest Chairman. The division, which had not had a meeting for 25 years, was a Division on paper only. But hey, I was retired so getting it restarted was no big deal. Just a new challenge for me.

At the end of my two year term as Superintendent, we had \$1000.00 in the Division bank account, and had established quarterly meetings in different parts of the Division. I had achieved my goal of getting the Division up and running and served my term on the Regional BOD, so I was off to the next opportunity or challenge.



Scratch built in brass.





Current trolley layout.

I was still working on the AP program and finally became the 7th person in the world to achieve the honor of receiving the Gold Spike and all 11 of the NMRA Achievement Program Awards. Yep, Elected Official was the last award I got. Politics is not a part of my mentoring capabilities.



I was even given one of the original patches, designed by a group of NMRA members, to show a modeler had obtained all of the AP awards. It was to be called the Grand Master Model Railroader, (GMMR) award. It was presented long ago to the NMRA BOD for approval and was rejected because?? Not sure?? I heard several stories. Here is a photo of the unapproved Patch. Anyone else have one? If so, I would love to compare stories and reminisce about the guys who developed the patch and tried to get it officially approved. My email is jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

Compare the patch I received from Pat Harriman MMR, the NMRA National AP Chairman, when I obtained all of the AP awards to the regular MMR award. Better than nothing I guess, but most people don't see the difference. In fact, does anyone else even have one? Earlier in my profile, there's a photo of the Plaque I received from Pat. I was recently asked if I could prove where I got the plaque. Anyone else have one? There is also a copy of the letter I received from Pat about sending me the patch and plaque. Maybe it's a piece of NMRA AP history? I also received a letter from a past National AP Chairman Rick Shoup MMR which enclosed a pin with the number 7 on it. I really treasure Pat's letter and award plaque and patch and Rick's letter with the Pin. Anyone need any more proof?

Model building is and has really always been my true love and priority in model railroading. I had to have shelves built in my Train House so I could store the models that would not fit on my layout. I currently build in both S Scale and O Scale because I write articles in both *The S Scale Resource* (which has since been discontinued) and *The O Scale Resource* magazines. More on that later. Got to put those models somewhere until it comes time to dispose of them.

All of my scratch building is in brass, basswood, or more recently card. I also recently got into building 1920/30 period automobiles in brass. I also created some scenes such as an S scale motorcycle club with a



Paul Dgri deigned the card clubhouse, motorcycles from the Netherlands. Automobile scratchbuild in brass. All S scale.

clubhouse, motorcycles, motorcycle riders with a patch I designed for their cuts (vests). I had four manufacturers help me, one in the Netherlands, one in Spain and two in the USA. It was great fun. Here is a photo. By the way if you start a chapter of a Motorcycle Club on your model railroad let me know. We accept visitors in any scale. Also if you have a motorcycle club with a patch you designed love to see your patch. Your club members are always welcome.



Our motorcycle patch.

I know my model railroading interest has certainly changed over time depending on my age and circumstances. But all of it has been a lot of fun, and a great learning experience. I am fortunate to have model railroading in my life and to be able to

continue my model building. Today any maintenance or operation on my layout are way down on my to do list. Steve Sherrill keeps telling me to use battery power so I can eliminate track and overhead wire maintenance. More education I will need. Maybe we will see!

Stage 8. But then another major change occurred in my life. As I said earlier, I had been writing articles for various model railroad magazines for 30 years or so. With this, hopefully final move, and *48 Ft/O Scale Railroading* going out of business, I had taken a break from writing. Then I found two, new to me, online digital publications called *S Scale Resource* and *O Scale Resource* magazines published by Amy and Dan Dawdy. A conversation with Dan and the “New Tracks Modeling” series came into life for both magazines. That was over 7 years ago. The magazines are free to subscribers so take a look if you are not already reading both of them. You may find a mentor. I truly hope so.

The idea for the series was simple. Profile talented modelers and small to medium sized manufacturers who can mentor other modelers to help them improve and gain more confidence in their ability to build models and help small manufacturers grow. In this way, the skills, modeling techniques and general modeling knowledge can be passed on to a future generation of modelers so our great hobby can continue to grow and develop. Hopefully, we will also get more modelers building more models.

Stage 9. More change occurred. At least it was not a relocation! After writing the series for about two years, the Covid pandemic arrived, and based on comments from readers, and with the technical help of Dylan Lambert who owns Lambert Locomotive Works, the weekly “New Tracks Modeling” Zoom Show was started on May 2, 2020.

After awhile, the weekly Zoom Shows on Wednesday evenings at 7pm Eastern Time were enjoyed by hundreds of modelers from all corners of the globe; and I started the Bi-Weekly Zoom show on Thursday evenings at 7pm Eastern Time called *Modeling Lifestyle*. During this period, “New Tracks Modeling” also held digital train shows featuring small and medium sized manufacturers. Viewers were amazed to find manufacturers they had never heard of before. I stopped the train shows because of lack of volunteers to help produce them. Oh well. When I get volunteers, we can always start them up again. Anyone want to help? Let me know.



All of these digital efforts are run by volunteers and I owe all of them so many thanks for the time and effort they put into making the shows successful. Since all the shows are live, we all learned as we went along how to use the technology and produce the shows. While we made, and still make, mistakes I am extremely proud of every show. I know we have given the shows our best and I believe the viewers appreciate our efforts.

About this time, I was appointed Ambassador for the Association of Professional Model Builders (APMM) to the model railroad community. I believe the training and education that model railroaders have makes them perfect candidates to become professional model makers. I was honored to represent the APMM. I would encourage you to consider joining this organization so you can meet and learn from professional model makers. For more information please visit their website <https://www.modelmakers.org/>

Now it is 2025, and the “New Tracks Modeling” series of articles is in it’s eighth year of publication; the weekly Zoom Shows are entering their 6th year with over 1,400 recorded videos on

our YouTube New Tracks Modeling channel with about 2,200 YouTube subscribers; plus a Website, newtracksmodeling.com with an additional 1,500 plus, subscribers. We also have a monthly Newsletter called *Observations* and a new Facebook group called New Tracks Modeling. I am very proud of what a group of volunteer modelers has achieved.

The current leadership team who help produce and edit the Zoom and YouTube Shows, publish the newsletter and website consists of dedicated volunteers, just like the many other volunteers, who have been a part of New Tracks Modeling in the past, and the presenters who show their modeling skills and manufacturers, hobby stores, and associations who support our shows. Thank you everyone.

Stage 10, Writing my articles and hosting our Zoom and YouTube Shows, plus my personal model building have become my life, and I love every second of it. Well, almost every second of the 8 to 12 hours a day, 7 days a week I spend working on these projects. But hey, I am retired and there is more to do!

So 2 years ago I founded the New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship program for high school graduates who are continuing their undergraduate education in a STEAM program in an institution of higher learning. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. 2023 was our first year and we provided one scholarship of \$1,000.00; and in 2024, our first year as a 501(c)(3), we provided three \$2,000.00 scholarships.

All of the funding to pay for the New Tracks Modeling operating costs, the application for a 501(c)(3) non profit corporation and to pay for the scholarship is raised from volunteers who watch our Zoom and YouTube shows and read our articles.

Again, thank you all so much. We awarded the 2024 scholarships August 31st, on our Wednesday evening Zoom show. As the Corporation President, I am so very proud of our Florida Corporation members including our Scholarship Committee Chairman and Vice President Bob Davidson, our Secretary, Phil Edholm, our

Treasurer, Tom Farrell, and our attorney, Jeffery Jordan, who volunteered his services to get our Corporation established and our IRS approvals.

I hope and believe all the New Tracks Modeling efforts are making a small difference for modelers in helping them improve their model building knowledge and skills and thus enjoy our hobby more than ever before. I also hope our efforts at mentoring and helping with our scholarship program and other activities help keep modeling alive and well in our hobby for the future. The viewer interest we have, plus the encouraging emails I receive from viewers and readers, make me feel that 2025 is going to be a very good year for “New Tracks Modeling”.

I love talking to modelers, so please feel free to contact me anytime. If you have any suggestions for my articles, Zoom Shows, new project ideas, or just want to talk modeling or say hello my email is: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com. I will reply with my cell phone number.

What does the future hold for me and “New Tracks Modeling”? More of the same, plus an expanded Scholarship program and maybe some other new ideas I am thinking about and discussing with our leadership team.

Lastly, I am fortunate to have in place great modelers who will continue “New Tracks Modeling” and its programs after I am no longer able to do it. After all, I turned 85 this year and there will come a time, when I must step aside. Thanks for reading about my model railroad journey. Send me an email and let’s talk, laugh, and just have fun. Till next time please: “Help Keep Model Railroading and New Tracks Modeling Great”. To reach me, my email is still: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

Financially Help Our Next Generation of Modelers: Donate to Our Scholarship Program

We are currently asking for donations for our 2026 scholarships, and are hopeful we will exceed our 2025 level of offering three \$2,000.00 scholarships. As a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, your donation to the scholarship is tax deductible as allowed by law.

The New Tracks Mentoring Inc, grants Scholarships to qualified high school graduates who will be, or are currently, pursuing a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts or Math) undergraduate program at a two-year or four-year college or university or an accredited technical school.

Our scholarship funds are paid directly to the school in the student’s name and can be used for any fee owed to the school, including tuition, room, board, or other school fees such as stuff bought at the school's bookstore. Therefore, if you are fortunate enough to have another scholarship which pays your tuition, our scholarship can be used to pay for other school expense

It’s Easy to Donate to Our Scholarship Fund

The simplest way for individuals or corporations to donate is to use the Zeffy platform. We have chosen Zeffy as they insure that 100% of your contribution will go to our scholarship. There are no processing or administrative fees. [To use the Zeffy platform, please click here.](#)

If you wish to make a contribution by check, make the check payable to New Tracks Mentoring, Inc., and mail it to:

New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship
c/o Tom Farrell
2026 W. Stanton Ct.
Bloomington, IN 47404

Individual Donors to our 2025 Scholarships

David Menard, Gerald, Linda Feeney, Jim Kellow MMR, Ft Ron Walters, Bob Charles MMR, Jeff Zigley, Bob Davidson, Jim Foley, Anonymous, Greg Cassidy, Jamie Bothwell, Michael Gorczynski, Rich Randall, Steve Sherrill, Jeff Jordan, Pat Rivard, James Koryta, Bill Bunce, Martin Breckbiel MMR, the Anonymous 2024 kick-off donor, Phil Edholm, Dave, and Evelyn Sweeney, **Jeffrey Peck, Bob Davison in the name of Jim Kellow MMR, and William Hawk.** Thank you all so much for the leadership and financial commitment you have made to our young future modeler's education. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Corporate Donors for 2025 Scholarships:

All corporate donations are greatly appreciated and will be duly recognized. Those companies that donate \$250.00 in any annual, scholarship cycle will be identified as Brass Donors; Silver Donors will be recognized for a \$500.00 contribution, Gold Donors for a \$750.00 contribution. Platinum Donors for a \$1,000.00 contribution, will receive special recognition. Donors who contribute at least \$2,000.00 will be listed as a specific scholarship sponsor. Please contact us at: ntms@newtracksmodeling.com to arrange for your corporate donations. Donate early to maximize your exposure. Remember, your contribution will help the young modelers who are the future of our hobby.

I am pleased and incredibly grateful to be able to announce the following \$1,000.00 Platinum donor, the following \$500.00 Silver Donor, and the following five \$250.00 Brass Donors for the 2025 Scholarships:

Platinum Donor

- **Amherst Railway Society**

Silver Donor

- **Great Scale Model Train Show in Timonium produced by Scott Geare**

Brass Donors

- **Brennans Model Railroading owned by Dennis Brennan**
- **The Model Railroad Resource LLC owned by Amy and Dan Dawdy**
- **LocoFi™ owned by WiFi Model Railroad LLC**
- **American Models owned by Karen Bashista**
- **Kershaw Craftsman Kits owned by Paul Reeves**

Thank you all so much for the leadership and the financial commitment you have made to our young modeler's education. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Accepting applications for 2026 Scholarship: January 1, 2025, through June 1, 2025

To learn more about the application process, please click [HERE](#).

If you have any questions, E-mail us at: NTMMS@newtracksmodeling.com.



Readers Can Help Spread the Word About Our Scholarship

Everyone who reads this can help get the word out to Scholarship donors and applicants by showing our scholarship banner at shows and events around the country, and by “word of mouth” communication at your local club and to friends.

Bob Davidson generously designed, printed, and donated five banners through his company, Exhibits and More, which are available to be shown at train shows and rail expos across the country. Bob recently sold his company and I am pleased to announce the

new owner has agreed to donate undated banners. Each banner is 3' wide and about 7' tall and has a QR code on it to link you directly to our website to get more information including the application to apply. The banners are in a retractable unit that is very easy to ship and set-up. In addition to the banners, we can also provide handouts about the Scholarship Program to local events we are not able to attend in person.

Look for New Tracks Modeling at all the shows and events you attend. We will be at the Amherst Show, the Great Scale Model Train Show (GSMTS) in Timonium, the O Scale Meet in Chicago, the National Narrow Gauge Show in St Louis, Al Judy's two shows, O Scale, and O Narrow Gauge, in Philadelphia, the NASG 2025 National Convention and various other shows and conventions to be announced. Greg Cassidy represented New Tracks Modeling and our Scholarship at the Great Scale Train Show in Timonium, Maryland.

Thank you to everyone who has helped us display our banners, pass out our handouts at shows around the country, and vocally promote our program within their clubs and at events, last year. We are currently taking reservations for our banners for 2025/2026. To let us know you are interested in displaying our banner or need handouts for a local event, please contact: Mitch Lovelace at Mitch.Lovelace@newtracksmodeling.com

New Tracks Mentoring Inc, is the only national volunteer nonprofit model railroading organization representing all scales and gauges who has created a nonprofit 501(c)(3) company for the sole purpose of raising funds and providing scholarships throughout the United States for the benefit of young modelers that are pursuing a STEAM undergraduate education after high school graduation, in a college, university or accredited technical school. Our scholarships are paid directly to the school in the student's name and can be used for any fee owed to the school, including tuition, room, board, or other school fees such as stuff bought at the school's bookstore. So please help the young people in our great hobby.

The contributions and support by the current model railroad community can help the next generation of modelers provide the leadership and continue the traditions of our great hobby. For more scholarship information and to donate visit our website: Newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship or [just click here to donate](#).

Get Our Free Monthly Newsletter: “*New Tracks Modeling Observations*”

New Tracks Modeling’s monthly free newsletter, edited by Martin Brechbiel MMR, is designed to provide ideas and commentary about all scales and gauges in our great model railroad hobby. We also provide advance notices about upcoming New Tracks Modeling features, opinions, and projects including our Scholarship Program.

All subscribers to our website and donors to New Tracks Modeling’s Patreon account, or to our Scholarship Program automatically get a link to our newsletter by email each month. Also, all subscribers to Amy and Dan Dawdy’s free *O Scale Resource* digital magazine receive a copy. Anyone can see and download our monthly newsletter on our website: <http://newtracksmodeling.com>.

Please contact our Executive Editor, Martin Brechbiel, MMR, Martin.Brechbiel@newtracksmodeling.com, with your articles, comments, suggestions, details, new product information in any scale, upcoming events and shows, and more!

New Tracks Modeling’s Monthly Newspaper Column is reaching a Potential New Model Railroading Audience.

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 is are links to my December 20, 2024, and January 24, 2025, articles in the Citrus County Chronicle newspaper: [December 20, 2024 article](#) and [January 24, 2025, article](#)

Wouldn’t it be great to have articles about model railroaders in newspapers all over the country? Why don’t you write one? 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.

Monthly Scale, Hi-Rail, and Narrow Gauge Modeling Segments for our Zoom Show

G Scale Modeling hosted by [Steve Bittinger](#)

Sponsored by [New Creations Victorian Railroad Buildings LLC](#)

O Scale Modeling hosted by [David Schultz](#)

Sponsored by [O Scale Central](#)

O Gauge Hi-Rail Modeling hosted by [Dennis Brennan](#)

Sponsored by [Millhouse River Studio](#)

S Scale Modeling hosted by [Jamie Bothwell](#)

Sponsored by [NASG](#)

S Hi-Rail Modeling hosted by [Joel Weber](#)

Sponsored by [American Models](#)

HO scale Modeling hosted by [Ed O'Rourke](#)

Sponsored by [Mainline Hobby Supply](#)

**N Scale Modeling hosted by [Clem Harris](#)
Sponsored by [National Capital Trains](#)**

**Narrow Gauge Modeling hosted by [Steve Sherrill](#)
Sponsored by [Carroll Creek Design](#)**

Eric Kennedy series on: “Becoming a Model Railroader” starts on our March 12, 2025, show.

“On New Year’s Day of 2023 I decided to make a New Year’s Resolution different from any other year. After having been raised in a railroading family and spent some years as a railfanner, I decided to take on a new challenge, becoming a model railroader. I have plenty of space, but I wanted to start small, so I decided to build a 4’ x 8’ model railroad in HO scale. I spent much of the last two years acquiring the tools and materials I would need to build my layout including track, engines and rolling stock, bench materials, scenery materials, and other various pieces. I believe I am ready to begin this journey of assembling my model railroad with the help of New Tracks Modeling experts to help guide me along the way. Join me by watching my progress and I hope it inspires you to begin your own journey.”

Paul Reeves and Dennis Brennan will host a monthly show segment called “Inspiration for Everyday Imagination”

Dennis Brennan explained the new series this way: “I’m sure you’ve been amazed at the creativity of talented modelers and wondered how does one do that? We’re all creative in our own way but some modelers simply seem to have a knack for creating scenes or models that just look “right.” Now, no one is a born craftsman. We all have to hone our skills. But still, there’s that intangible creative spark that leave some of us in awe. How can we achieve that? Does inspiration spur imagination? And, if so, where does that inspiration come from? Or, perhaps, it’s the imagination that creates the inspiration.

Together, we’re going to discover these gateways to open up our creativity in a brand new 15 minute segment in a monthly Zoom show segment hosted by Paul Reeves and me, Dennis Brennan. This came about from a concept originated by Chris Coarse. Jim Kellow liked the idea, and Paul and I are going to run with it. It’s titled “Inspiration for Everyday Imagination”. Chris Coarse will be our first guest.”

NewTracks Modeling “MY BUILD” Monthly Zoom Show Segment hosted by Chris Course and Greg Cassidy. [Sponsored by Model Railroad Resource LLC](#)

The main purpose of our MY BUILD is to provide a platform for modelers to showcase their modeling projects, highlight their achievements, seek advice or assistance if needed, and help others learn new skills.

To make things more exciting, some months MY BUILD segments includes challenges. These challenges typically aim to encourage a diverse range of projects within the modeling community. Additionally, these challenge shows are open-ended in order to include any other models a viewer wants to share.

The segments are designed to be supportive and non-judgmental so modelers can help each other learn and develop their modeling skills. Join our new Facebook Group, New Tracks Modeling, and continue the discussions about the models shown after the show.

Every viewer of New Tracks Modeling is encouraged to send in one or more photos including a caption talking about what the photos show of their modeling to the show's host, Chris Coarse at railrunner130@hotmail.com. Chris will organize these photos into a PowerPoint slideshow. During the show, each participant is given the opportunity to discuss their slides. You can share valuable tips, discuss techniques, answer questions from the audience, or pose your own questions about something you want to learn. This activity proves to be a lot of fun for everyone.

MY BUILD is designed to serve railroad modelers of all scales, gauges, and age groups. Everyone is encouraged to participate. Chris Coarse is the owner of [Conowingo Models](#) and he and Co-host Greg Cassidy welcome any of your comments or suggestions for the MY BUILD. Their email is: [Chris Coarse](#) and [Greg Cassidy](#).

The schedule and topics for the 2025 My Builds:

- January 22, 2025: Free for all! Anything goes!
- February 19, 2025: Kitbashes, Scratchbuilds;
- March 19, 2025: Free for all! Anything goes!
- April 16, 2025: Automation/Animation. Make it move!
- May, 2025: Free for all! Anything goes!
- June, 2025: Water. Waterfront buildings, wharves, boats, covered bridges, water tanks, anything water related.
- July, 2025: Free for all!! Anything goes!
- August, 2025: Harvest: farm equipment, grain elevators, hopper cars, mills, tractors, agriculture, barns, chicken coops, livestock, cattle pens/ranching, cattle cars, reefer cars.
- September, 2025: Free for all! Anything goes!
- October, 2025: Layouts. Finished, in-progress, switching layouts, modules, dioramas.
- November, 2025: Free for all! Anything goes!
- December, 2025: Interiors., Insides of buildings, engine houses, cabooses.
- January, 2026: Free for all! Anything goes!



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**Support all the O scale shows
See our show list in this issue!**

NEW TRACKS MODELING

"My Build" Featuring "Interiors" Models From Our Viewers (12-21-24)

[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.

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 slideshow. During the show, each participant is given the opportunity to discuss their slides. You can share valuable tips, discuss techniques, answer questions from the audience, or pose your own questions about something you want to learn.

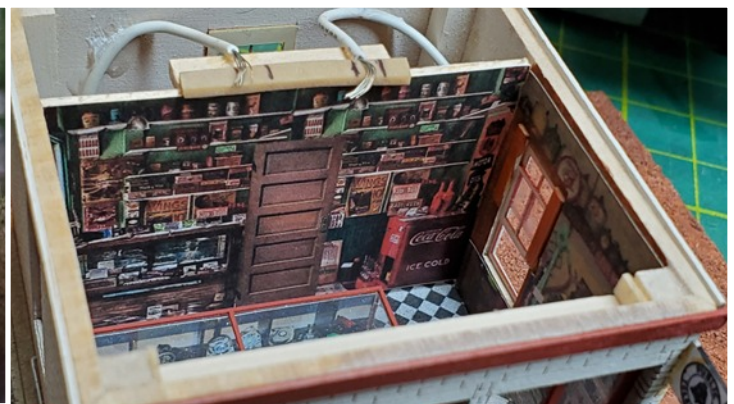


**We could not
print all the
images in this
build so check
out the video
here!**



Greg Cassidy - Greg.Cassidy@newtracksmodeling.com – HO scale. Tower kit by AMB on my layout. Interior details are mostly by Scale Structures. Below: HO scale.

Britner's Garage diorama by CCK. I made wall backgrounds in Photoshop. Display case by Inter-Action Hobbies.

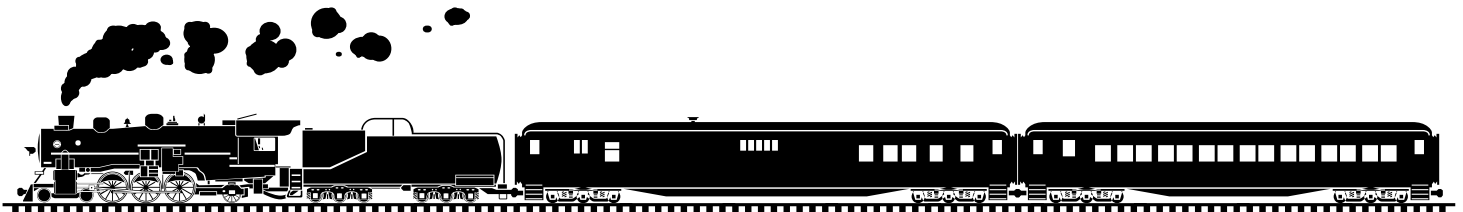




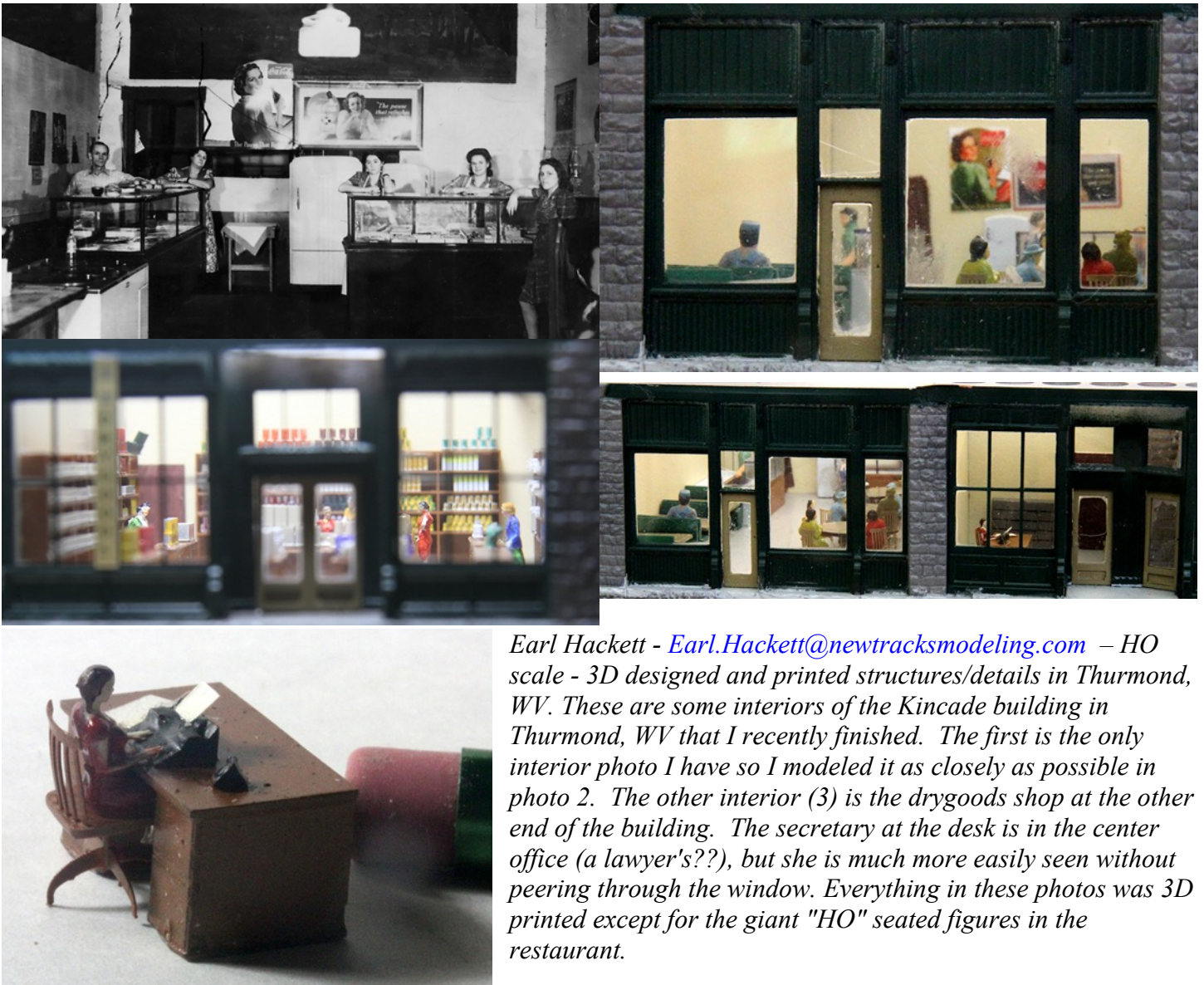
Greg Cassidy - Greg.Cassidy@newtracksmodeling.com – HO scale. Laurel Bank Brothel (Restaurant) by CCK for another layout. Interior mostly by PF Hobbies (3D printed). Noch Sexy Figures not shown but part of display on layout. Below: O scale. Inter-Action Victorian Conservatory diorama. Interior from Inter-Action and scratchbuilt.



Phil Edholm - philedholm@newtracksmodeling.com – O scale. All scratchbuilt. Constructed largely of 1/8 acrylic for strength with wood on both sides. Daniels Express Transfer Company. Spreckels Sugar Warehouse.



Did you miss an issue of The O Scale Resource? Forgot to look? Well, sign up here and never miss another exciting issue. We'll send you an Email when the latest issue is loaded to our site. Don't worry, we won't sell or post your Email address to anyone! Click Here to sign up today!



Earl Hackett - Earl.Hackett@newtracksmodeling.com – HO scale - 3D designed and printed structures/details in Thurmond, WV. These are some interiors of the Kincade building in Thurmond, WV that I recently finished. The first is the only interior photo I have so I modeled it as closely as possible in photo 2. The other interior (3) is the drygoods shop at the other end of the building. The secretary at the desk is in the center office (a lawyer's??), but she is much more easily seen without peering through the window. Everything in these photos was 3D printed except for the giant "HO" seated figures in the restaurant.

We could not print all the images in this build so check out the video here!

Bob Farquhar - bob.farquhar@newtracksmodeling.com – HO Scale Interaction Gas Station. Sierra West Deer Mills/ Mill Creek. Vector Cut details.





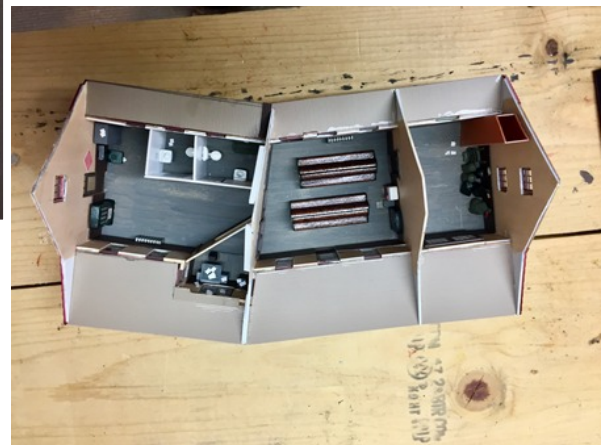
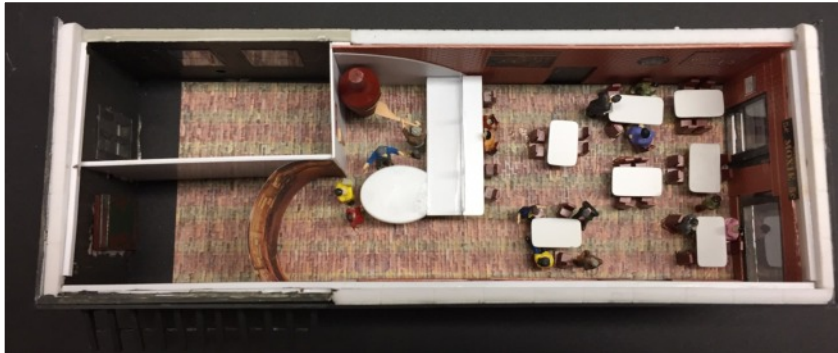
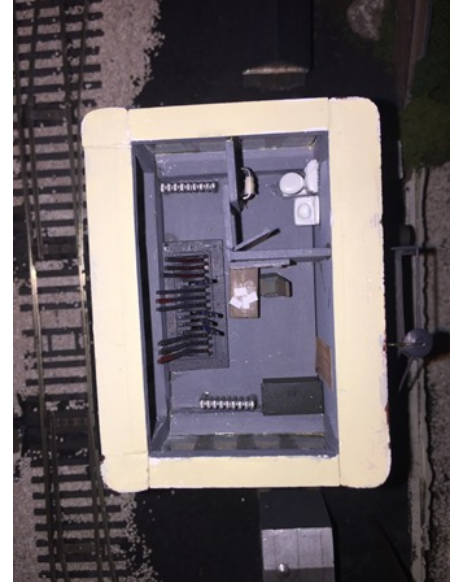
Jeff Jordan - jordan.jordan54@verizon.net - O Scale - Mining Supply Company. Downtown Deco Metals Bank Bldg. Kitwood Hill Engine House.



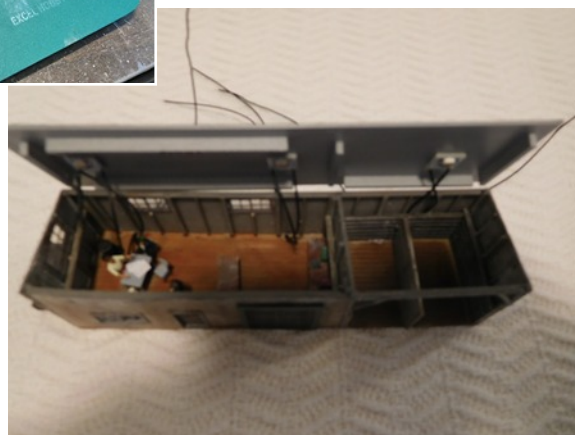
Steve Sherrill - ssmsherrill@aol.com - On30 - Atlas Crossing Shanty in Maybe, WV. Scratchbuilt still. Grandt Line switch stands. Peco switch. Plainville, CT station, modified scratch built from the original plans.



Ed O'Rourke – edwardorourke1@me.com - HO – An old AHM 12-2 Pullman “James Logan” which runs in “The Montrealer/Washingtonian” NH tower. The most difficult part was sliding the wire that holds the levers through all of them without screwing it up. There was a lot of “cussin’”. This is a plaster kit, I think by Railway Design Associates.



Ron Walters - rwalters@friars.us – HO scale - Banta Kit with scratchbuilt interior. Apartment from the movie Julie and Julia. Walthers structure with interior.



Greg Shinnie – shinnie@rogers.com – HO scale - I thought I would send you a couple pics of my SS Ltd. kit of Dorothy's House that I recently completed. I built the house with a full interior upstairs & downstairs, I also lit the interior using LED's throughout. The first couple of pics are progress photos of this house, the last ones are the completed photos.



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Gary Shurgold – HO – Woodland Scenics Guns and Tackle. Car shop is scratchbuilt, except forklift and figures. Plainville, CT station, modified scratch built from the original plans.



Bill Stimson – wstimson@q.com – N scale – Station scratchbuilt interior and exterior.



NEW TRACKS MODELING

"My Build" Featuring "Interiors" Models From Our Viewers (01-22-25)

[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.

Martin Breckbiel MMR - martinwb@verizon.net - O Scale – Scratchbuilt flat car and tank car. Plainville, CT station, modified scratch built from the original plans.



Greg Cassidy – gcassidy2@verizon.net – HO – Pola Schaefer Brewery. The kit was produced by Pola, AHM, Model Power and Tyco over the years, all under different names. – N – MotrakModels, Wolfboro Freight House



Gary Shurgold – gshurgold@gmail.com - various scales – Completed four ship builds/rebuilds in three months. Approximately HO scale plastic Tugboat and plastic New York Fire Boat. The fireboat featured tons of moving parts, many made from brass. Revell Cutty Sark that was a basket case. Gary cleaned it up, repaired a mast, lots of sails and rigging.



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

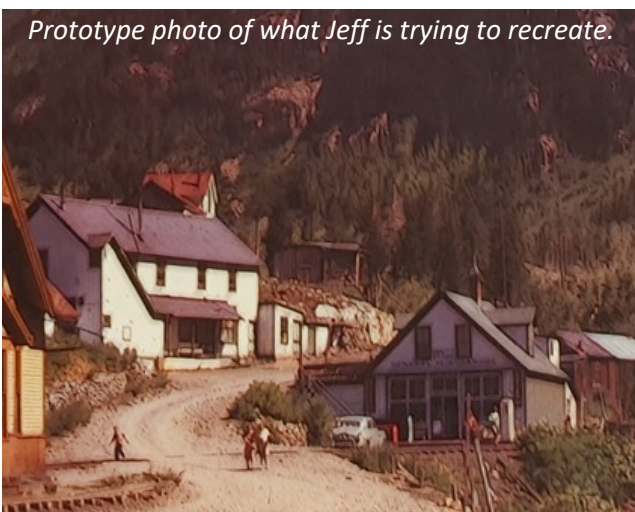


Bob Farquhar – bob.farquhar@sympatico.ca - HO Scale Rickety Cove work-in-progress by Bar MillsHouse





Bill Stimson –
wstimson@q.com – N scale –
 Scratch built version of
 George Sellios El Pico. Scratch
 build of a Jerome, AZ barn
 using Tichy windows. Picked up
 an American Model Builders
 Rooming House at a swap
 meet.



Prototype photo of what Jeff is trying to recreate.

Jeff Jordan - jordan.jordan54@verizon.net – O Scale –
 D&RGS Ophir featuring several scratchbuilt buildings and
 an American Builders Kit. Video was shown.

[Click below to right to Jeff's video in the MYBUILD show.](#)



Buy US A COFFee



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...

As with any ad supported endeavor, there are ups and downs. We have not raised our ad rates (and will not) since we started 11 years ago. We feel the rates are more than favorable for the thousands readers our magazine reaches. Of course, not everyone wants to advertise instead using Facebook and other social media. In a normal paper magazine you have the subscription fee that more than covers mailing and normal operations. Not having that is fine here, but our costs have also climbed.

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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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.

O Scale March Meet

March 20-23, 2025

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

Strasburg 2 Rail Train Show

April 12, 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.](#)

O Scale West

May 23rd through 25th, 2025

O Scale West presents the 33rd Annual
2025 O Scale West

May 23-25, 2025 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Santa Clara, California.

Website: <https://oscalewest.com/>

Email: info@oscalewest.com

East Penn Traction Club Model Trolley Meet

May 15, 2025 - May 17, 2025

The meet draws the premier modelers and manufacturers from all over the country for a weekend of viewing models, layouts, films, photos, slides, model contests, and how-to clinics on subjects ranging from hanging trolley wire to modeling subway cars. The theme for the meet will be Cars of the St. Louis Car Company.

Website: <https://eastpenn.org/meet/>

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/>

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.](#)

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