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Why Made in America STILL Works

Those of you who read our open letter published in the various magazines in the past may be skeptical of why products made in America are a better idea. While many of you know that our main competitor, Atlas, has been having little success getting track and switches from their Chinese suppliers over the last year and a half (as of Feb 2015) there are other reasons as well. Here at Ross Custom we had a price increase on Jan 1st 2015, our first increase in nearly five years. I noticed that even though Atlas hasn't been available the prices in their online store keep going up and up. I thought I'd show you a comparison of regular retail prices as I write this today, of Ross Custom made in America versus Atlas made in China. Note we use switch machines made by Z-Stuff for Trains on our remotes that are made in Taiwan.

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031 REMOTE.....	\$89.95
042 REMOTE.....	\$89.95
054 REMOTE.....	\$89.95
064 REMOTE.....	\$89.95
072 REMOTE.....	\$89.95
080 REMOTE.....	\$94.95
096 REMOTE.....	\$99.95
054/031 CURVED REMOTE.....	\$99.95
072/054 CURVED REMOTE.....	\$89.95
096/072 CURVED REMOTE.....	\$114.95
0120/096 CURVED REMOTE	\$134.95
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042 WYE REMOTE	\$94.95
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072 WYE REMOTE	\$94.95
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#5 REMOTE.....	\$89.95
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054	\$6.99
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072	\$6.99
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084	\$7.99
092	\$7.99
096	\$8.49
0100	\$8.99
0104	\$8.99
0112	\$9.49
0120	\$9.99
0128	\$10.99
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ATLAS MADE IN CHINA

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NOT MADE	
072 REMOTE.....	\$104.95
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
072/054 CURVED REMOTE.....	\$132.95 WOW!
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
072 REMOTE.....	\$104.95
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
#5 REMOTE.....	\$129.95 WOW!
NOT MADE	
#8 REMOTE.....	\$132.95
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
DOUBLE SLIP SWITCH....	\$264.95
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	

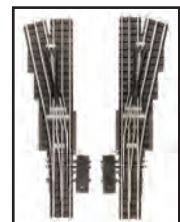
027.....	\$7.95
036.....	\$6.75
045.....	\$7.95
054.....	\$6.75
063.....	\$8.95
072.....	\$9.95 WOW!
081.....	\$11.95 WOW!
NOT MADE	
090.....	\$14.50 WOW!
099.....	\$15.95 WOW!
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
0108.....	\$18.95 WOW!
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
10 INCH STRAIGHT....	\$6.75
40" STRAIGHT.....	\$25.50
40" FLEX TRACK....	\$26.50 WOW REALLY?? YEP!!



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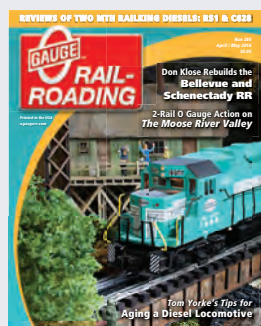
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ON THE COVER

GP38 No. 1956, adorned in jade green livery, operates on Don Klose's Bellevue and Schenectady Railroad, a 3-rail O gauge fictional close cousin of the New York Central. The locomotive is a custom-painted Weaver model, now lettered for the B&S.

Photo by Jim Policastro



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Talk About Progress



My “Editor’s Corner” in the February/March issue (Run 283) was devoted to the impressive new 3-rail O gauge layout being built by Brian Mount, a friend I met some time ago at David Minarik’s Mercer Junction Train Shoppe in Mercer, Pennsylvania. Dave’s shop is largely focused on O gauge, and in addition to being a fine place to see and buy trains, it is also a great place to meet with fellow area hobbyists, spend a bit of time helping those new to the hobby, and picking the brains of more experienced O-gaugers to glean some useful tips, tricks, and ideas.

It was in this setting that I first met Brian back when he was still in the early planning stages for a big layout—the kind of really big layout that most of us would likely relegate to long-term

dreams that may not even be attainable. But that’s not Brian! Even though this would be his first in-with-both-feet venture into the diverse and fun-filled world of O gauge model railroading, he was fired up to think big and do big. During subsequent visits to Mercer Junction, I observed Dave and other shop regulars—many of them from the Greenville Model Railroad Club—studying Brian’s preliminary plans and offering suggestions for modifications that might enhance operational capability. It was an evolutionary process that would pay big dividends and save money when actual layout-building began.

I think it’s fair to say that progress to date on this 24’ x 60’ layout provides ample evidence of Brian’s can-do and get-it-done attitude. Although I did not have a chance to visit the project site over the past Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday periods, much has been accomplished since my last visit, to say the least.

Approximately 85% of the benchwork for this very large layout has now been completed, and it is beautifully executed with wide, sweeping curves and precisely aligned straightaways. To get to this point, Brian managed to host six group work sessions over the busy holiday season by “borrowing” time from his own busy work schedule as a crane service owner. In just a few weeks time, he and his dedicated Tuesday Night Gang of volunteers made use of 10 boxes of Midwest cork roadbed, laid some 600 feet of GarGraves track, and installed no less than 45 Ross switches, resulting in completion of the two main lines.

The layout’s multilevel track configuration has also been equipped with both the MTH DCS and Lionel Legacy operating systems so contemporary command control trains from a variety of manufacturers can easily be accommodated. Brian reports that switch and track wiring is the current task at hand, with signal testing being done along the way.

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Evening work sessions usually conclude with animated discussions related to scenery plans, accompanied by late-night snacks provided by Brian's understanding and supportive wife, Susan.

The two photos presented here were taken by Dave Minarik just a few days prior to this column being written. Photo 1 depicts an overall view of what a visitor can expect to see--sans scenery at this point, of course--upon entering the train room. Compare this image with the two photos that appeared with my earlier column and it's easy to see how much has been completed in a very short time.

Photo 2 is a view from the opposite end of the train room looking toward the entry door, which can be seen in the far right background. These two construction-in-progress photos, when compared with those presented with the previous column, provide

ample evidence of what Brian, with the help of a talented group of friends, has been able to accomplish in the brief period of just a month or so.

And make no mistake about it, those friends of Brian's, some old and some new, have been key to this level of progress having been achieved in such a short time. Aside from illustrating this in follow-up fashion, I guess there are two additional points to be made in this column:

- Procrastination doesn't get trains up and running.
- The help of friends, new and old, can sure make things go faster and easier.

I have a hunch that we'll be seeing a fairly complete Brian Mount layout by the time Run 288 rolls around. 🚂



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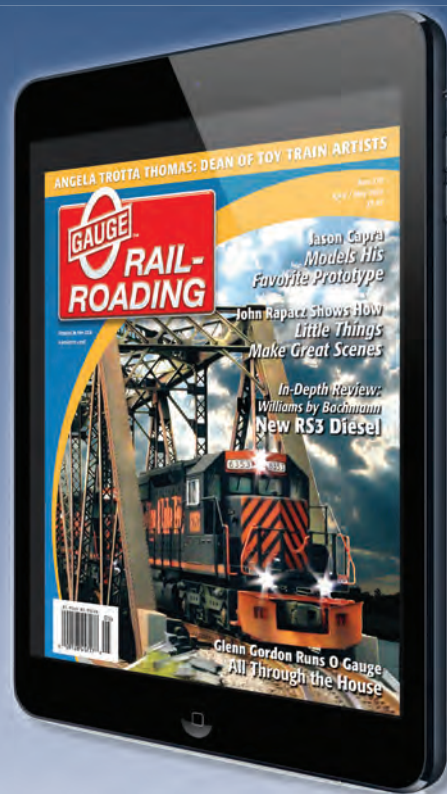
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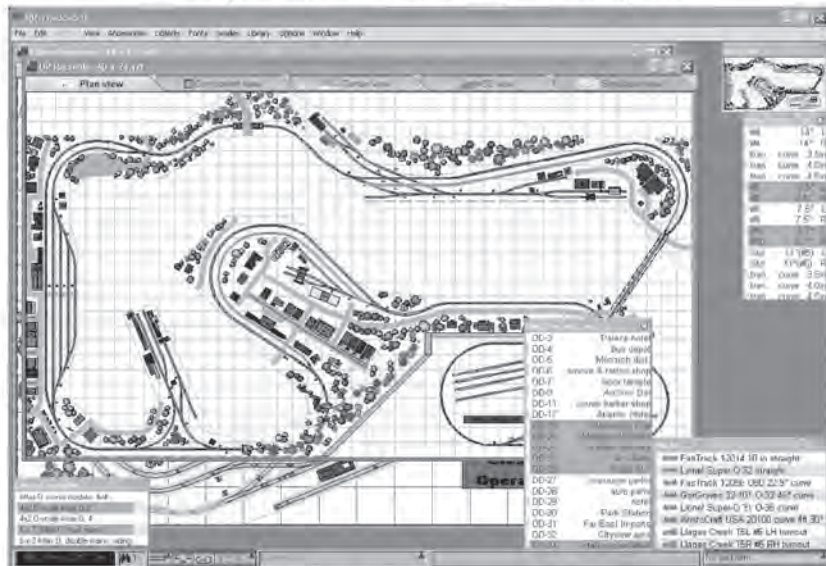


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Product Showcase



Canadian Commuter and Caboose

The Canadian Toy Train Association (CTTA) recently announced two new O scale items of special interest to fans of British Columbia Railway. First are limited-run O scale British Columbia Railway RDC-1 and RDC-2 to be manufactured by Sunset/3rd Rail. These popular commuter units are available powered or unpowered in both 2-rail and 3-rail. Powered units will cost \$600.00 each, and unpowered units will cost \$450.00. Also announced by the CTТА is a Pacific Great Eastern (renamed British Columbia Railway in 1972) steel-side caboose in two road numbers. The caboose, to be manufactured by MTH, will have a limited run of 100 in 3-rail, and the cost is \$60.00 plus \$10.00 shipping per car. For complete ordering information, e-mail mlhorne@shaw.ca or call 604-560-4028.

New Companion for DCS Users



The 3rd Edition of *The DCS Companion*, written by Barry Broskowitz, is an extensive 242-page guide for operating the MTH Digital Command System. The book includes 79 charts and illustrations, all intended to educate the reader on the basic and advanced features and functions of DCS. The 3rd edition explores the newest aspects of DCS, including the latest version of the DCS software, and

implementation and operation of DCS using the DCS App for smartphones and tablets. The 3rd edition also adds an index that allows quick and easy access to reference information. The book is a valuable reference for both the experienced DCS operator as well as those seeking to add DCS for the first time to a new or existing layout. The eBook version (pdf) costs \$14.95, and the printed copy is \$34.95. Individuals can order the book online from the MTH website: <http://mthtrains.com/60-1386>. The book is also available from many OGR On-Line Forum sponsors. Dealers and clubs can obtain a significant discount on quantity orders of the book by contacting the author via his OGR On-Line Forum e-mail address.



All That's Missing Is the Popcorn

Woodland Scenics has a new O scale addition to its continually expanding Built-&-Ready Landmark Structure line. The BR5854 Theater offers classic vintage architecture, an expertly weathered stucco-over-brick exterior, tall arched windows, gilded kick plates on the front doors, a decorative tile and carved wood-trim facade, and much more. Building includes window treatments, decals, a first-floor printed interior, and installed lighting that is compatible with the Woodland Scenics Just Plug Lighting System. The theater is ready for layout placement and is custom-painted, realistically weathered, and loaded with detail and scene-setting accessories. Includes four Warm White LED lights (one lights the marquee, another lights the ticket booth, and two light the building interior). Approximate footprint: 8-1/8" x 6-11/16" x 7-1/2". MSRP is \$169.99. Purchase the theater at your favorite hobby store. For more information and to see other Built-&-Ready buildings, visit www.woodlandscenics.com.

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Cheers!

In 2012, Yuengling Brewery became the largest US-owned brewery in the country. Having celebrated its 184th birthday in 2015, the Pottsville brewery is the oldest continuously operating brewery in the US. Attendees of the Lionel Operating Train Society (LOTS) 37th Annual Convention in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, in July will have a chance to visit the historic Yuengling Brewery and sample the great products produced there. In addition, LOTS will offer a collectible Standard O scale double-sheathed D. G. Yuengling boxcar as the convention car celebrating the Yuengling story and the "can-do" spirit of Pennsylvania's many small historic towns. The Lionel-manufactured car is 11-1/2" long and features opening doors, die-cast sprung trucks, operating couplers, simulated wood-sheathed exterior, and steam-era fishbelly-style underframe with separately applied metal details. The car will operate on O31 and larger curves. Order deadline is March 11, 2016. Cost is \$74.00 per car, plus tax and shipping (get full price when ordering). Complete order information is available online at www.lots-trains.org.

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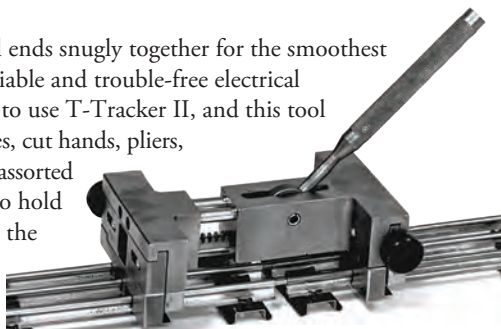


Dashing GE Power

Now available from Williams by Bachmann is General Electric's C44-9W locomotive, commonly referred to as the Dash 9. Equipped with the True Blast Plus polyphonic sounds package, this locomotive is available in a number of Norfolk Southern heritage paint schemes. The model navigates O31 curves and also features windshield wipers and upgraded window tooling; die-cast trucks, truck sides, and pilots; dual headlights; six-wheel power trucks with traction tires; dual motors with flywheel coasting action; all-metal gears; and electronic 6-amp reverse board with directional lock-out. The Williams by Bachmann Dash 9 is offered in five heritage road names: Central of Georgia No. 8101 (#20430), Southern No. 8099 (#20431), Lehigh Valley No. 8104 (#20432), Pennsylvania Railroad No. 8102 (#20433), and shown Nickel Plate Road No. 8100 (#20434). MSRP is \$499.95. Available at your favorite Williams by Bachmann dealer or www.bachmanntrains.com.

Snuggle-Up Your Track

T-Tracker II draws your track rail ends snugly together for the smoothest possible running and the most reliable and trouble-free electrical connections. It takes just seconds to use T-Tracker II, and this tool virtually eliminates busted knuckles, cut hands, pliers, screwdrivers, hammers, and other assorted tools or tricks. Use T-Tracker II to hold track together while securing it to the layout table, secure track while sawing special-length sections, and to hold track steady while removing an outside rail for extra insulation or special electrical connections. Made in the US from high-grade steel, the T-Tracker II costs \$175.00 plus \$20.00 shipping. Order direct from Richard Dodd, 3735 N.E. Shaver St., Portland, OR 97212; phone 503-281-9030; e-mail Ttracker2@aol.com.



Cruising E-Z Street

Make your city scene come alive with this new fleet of E-Z Street trucks available for the E-Z Street track system. Features include forward operation (only) on the O gauge E-Z Street track system and some other 3-rail turnouts and crossovers. The trucks navigate 16" diameter curves. Five new versions include a tow truck, ice cream truck, and food truck--each with whimsical graphics--and a choice of a solid-colored pickup truck in beige or green. MSRP is \$99.95. Available at your favorite Williams by Bachmann dealer or visit www.bachmanntrains.com.



Train Tote

The O Scale Hauler offers a variety of lightweight, heavy-duty, white corrugated cardboard boxes to transport and store O scale model locomotives and rolling stock. Designed for 2-rail and 3-rail items, the boxes are made of 275-pound-test, double-wall, corrugated cardboard and include 1/2" military-grade medium-density polyurethane foam to protect models on all four sides. The haulers are designed so models sit upright on their wheels to prevent damaging fine details. They have removable trays with removable dividers allowing the hobbyist to haul or store even more trains per box. Each compartment measures 28" x 4" x 5-1/2" on the inside--big enough for your passenger cars or autoracks. The Locomotive Hauler costs \$30.00, and the Freight and Passenger Car Hauler costs \$45.00. A special Club set that includes one Locomotive Hauler and two Freight and Passenger Car Haulers sells for \$100.00 plus shipping. For complete information and to order, visit The O Scale Hauler at www.oscalehauler.com or e-mail oscalehauler@verizon.net.



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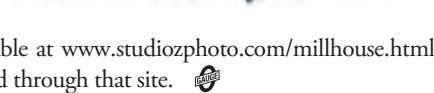
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Special Arches

Millhouse River Studio has introduced several new items. First is a brass Union Pacific/Southern Pacific-style electric arch. This provides another option for Millhouse River Studio turntables to complement the existing standard and PRR arches and provides the modeler with additional options. The arch is designed so it can be assembled for two different roads. If modeling SP, just leave off the upper platform and railings to have the rounded top arch. If modeling UP, you can complete the arch by adding the railings, platform, and upper triangle to the arch. Both versions allow the modeler to attach wires to simulate the power connection. The top of the arch allows the table to turn with wires connected, just like the prototype. In addition to the arch, a new laser-cut control cab is available to go on the bridge deck and it has a sliding door rather than the typical swinging door found on the standard or PRR cabs. The UP/SP bridge also comes with brass pipe railing stanchions that mount into the bridge tie ends, like the prototype. This new option is available when ordering. Also new are packs of high-quality track screws (not made in China). They are made to a higher standard so heads don't snap off and threads don't strip. The screws are 3/4" long and have a #1 Phillips pan head and black oxide finish. Packages of 48 screws cost \$3.49.

Full information and pricing for the turntable arch and control cab are available at www.studiozphoto.com/millhouse.html, and packages of screws can also be ordered through that site.



New DVDs from TM



TM is proud to announce the first in a series of instructional videos covering the new electronic control systems that have raised the bar for operating model trains. In Part 1, we show how easy Lionel's TMCC and LEGACY are to install and use and how they take you to an entirely new dimension of fun and realism.

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11982	N.J. Transit NW-2 Passenger (sealed)	195.00
19702	Penna K-4 Freight Set w/Railsounds	595.00

LIONEL BOXED SETS

1070	Chesapeake Royal Ltd. Diesel Frit	295.00
1071	Mid Atlantic Seaboard SD-9 Frit. Set	250.00
1158	C.P. Maple Leaf Set (sealed)	295.00
1260	N&W Continental Limited Diesel Frit	295.00
1451	Erie-Lackawanna SD-40 Frit. Set (sealed)	395.00
1552	Burlington Northern SD-40 Boxcar Set	395.00
1667	Milwaukee Road Frit. Set	395.00
1970	Southern Pacific Frit. Set	295.00
1971	Reading 'Quaker City' Set (sealed)	295.00
11700	Conrail SD-40 Freight Set 'O' Set	350.00
11705	Chesapeake SD-40 Hopper Set 'O' Set	350.00
11712	Great Lakes Steam Passenger Set	295.00
11713	Norfolk Southern Train Set (sealed)	395.00
11719	Delaware & Hudson RS-3 Freight Set	395.00
11733	Western Pacific Feather River Frit	295.00
11749	Western Maryland GP-20 Hopper Set	245.00
11912	Lionel Steel Ore Car Set	250.00
11918	Conrail Merger GP20 Frit. Set (sealed)	250.00
11984	Corvette GP-7 Freight Set (sealed)	495.00
21753	Fire & Rescue Service Station (sealed)	395.00
21758	Bellevue Fire Station Steam (sealed)	395.00
21788	Missile Launch Set (Postwar Celebration)	395.00
21900	Civil War Union General Set	395.00
31701	Boy's Train Steam Freight Set	495.00

LIONEL 1970-80s STYLE SETS

1072	Cross Country Express (sealed)	295.00
1381	ATSF 4-8-0 Cannonball Frit. (sealed)	125.00
1384	Union Pacific Steam Train (sealed)	195.00
1463	Coca-Cola NW-2 Set (sealed)	250.00
1487	PRR Broadway Ltd. Steam Pass. (sealed)	295.00
1577	Liberty Alco Diesel Set	150.00
1585	75th Anniversary Set	195.00
1663	Amtrak Lake Shore Ltd. Alco 4 Pass.	225.00
1684	I.C. U38B Drawbridge Set (track removed)	375.00
1697	SEARs Jersey Shore Steam Frit (sealed)	195.00
1996	Rock Island 0-4-0 Frit. w/2048 True Value	150.00
1792	Rock Island 0-4-0 Frit. w/2053 True Value	150.00
1860	Workin on the Railroad 0-4-0 Frit-sealed	75.00
1976	TCA Bicentennial U38B Passenger Set	195.00

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8050	#1 Delaware & Hudson U38C F&D	195.00
8056	Chicago Northwestern Trainmaster FM	250.00
8057	Burlington SW-1 Switcher	125.00
8080	Pennsylvania Tuscan F-3 Dummy 'B'	295.00
8081	Chesapeake U38B	125.00
8083	Seaboard SD-9	125.00
8084	65 Florida East Coast GP-9 Pow/Dummy	195.00
8071	72 Virginian SD-18 Power & Dummy	150.00
8154	Alaska SW-1 Switcher	145.00
8155	56 Monon U38B Power/Dummy	175.00
8157	Santa Fe blue/yellow Trainmaster FM	295.00
8158	59 Duluth Missable GP-35 Power/Dummy	195.00
8162	63 Ontario Northland SD-18 Power/Dummy	245.00
8290	55 Santa Fe Black/Gold GP-9 P/D	195.00
8292	63 Delaware & Hudson AA 'A'	150.00
8281	S.P. Daylight F-3 Dummy 'B' w/Horn	295.00
8285	Santa Fe SD-40	195.00
8353	56 Grand Trunk GP-7 Power/Dummy	175.00
8354	Erie NW-2 Switcher	125.00
8359	Chesapeake 'Gold' GP-7	125.00
8452	53 Erie Alco 'AB'	145.00
8453	Chesapeake GP-20	195.00
8477	NYC Lightening Strips GP-9 w/diesel horn	145.00
8550	61 Jersey Central GP-9 Power & Dummy	195.00
8551	Pennsylvania EP-5 Electric	145.00
8552	Southern Pacific Alco ABA's	245.00
8560	Chesapeake U38B Dummy	75.00
8562	65 Missouri Pacific GP-20 Pow. & Dum.	175.00
8566	Chesapeake NW-2 Switcher	125.00
8568	Milwaukee Road EP-5 Electric	145.00
8569	Preamble F-3 A Unit	125.00
8571	72 Frisco U38B Power & Dummy	175.00
8575	Milwaukee Road F-3 B-unit	125.00
8576	Penn Central GP-7	125.00
8598	Virginian Rebuilder	145.00
8607	Amtrak Alco B-unit (dummy)	75.00
8608	New Haven F-3 Dummy	245.00
8759	60 Erie-Lackawanna GP-9 Power/Dummy	195.00
8762	Great Northern EP-5 Electric	165.00
8753	Pennsylvania Tuscan 5-Stripe GP-1	295.00
8755	56 Santa Fe U38B Power & Dummy	195.00
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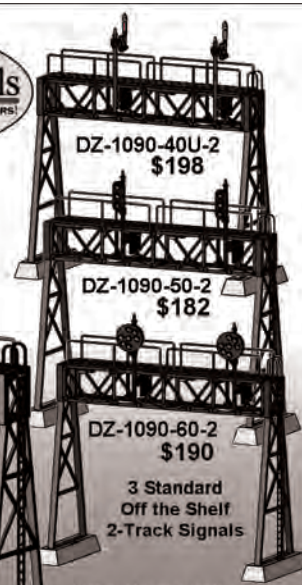


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L82136	N&W #522 (Black) GP30 (L) (BTO) Very Ltd Qty		\$469.95
L82137	N&W #542 (Blue) GP30 (L) (BTO) Very Ltd Qty		\$469.95
L82140	Southern #2594 GP30 (L) (BTO) Very Ltd Qty		\$469.95
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L82223	Rio Grande Alco PA AA Set (BTO)		\$839.95
L82246	Rio Grande Alco PB Pwrd Unit (BTO) Ltd Qty		\$444.95
L82275	B&O Chessie SD40 #7593 (L) (BTO) Very Ltd Qty		\$544.95
L82277	BN SD40 #6320 (L) (BTO)	Very Ltd Qty	\$544.95
L82280	Mopac SD40 #3007 (L) (BTO)	Very Ltd Qty	\$544.95
L82282	Conrail SD40 #6308 (L) (BTO)	Very Ltd Qty	\$544.95
L82284	Conrail (Savings Bonds) SD40 (L) (BTO) Ltd		\$544.95
L82285	SP SD40 #8402 (L) (BTO)	Very Ltd Qty	\$544.95
L82288	Clinchfield SD40 #3000 (L) (BTO) Very Ltd Qty		\$544.95
L82784	BN GP9 #1706 (L) (BTO)	Ltd Qty	\$459.95
L82788	Rio Grande GP9 #5911 (L) (BTO)	Ltd Qty	\$459.95
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L82792	Pennsy GP9 #7006 (L) (BTO)	Ltd Qty	\$459.95
L82794	Southern GP9 #6256 (L) (BTO)	Ltd Qty	\$459.95
L82796	Conrail SD38 #6935 (L) (BTO)	Ltd Qty	\$544.95
L82798	DM&IR SD38 #221 (BTO)		\$544.95
L82800	EJ&E SD38 #650 (BTO)		\$544.95
L82802	Penn Central SD38 #6940 (BTO)		\$544.95
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Working the 30" Gauge Line

Davenport No. 94 brings a string of wood-side coal gondolas from the mine to the boiler house below the furniture mill on the On30 gauge Mill Creek & Locomotive Railroad. Number 94 is a weathered and detailed Bachmann side-rod gas mechanical. Details, which hobbyist Al Judy added to this little workhorse, include cab shades, horn, spark arrestor, and some daily use items, such as oil cans and chains.

Classic Tin

A tinplate Red Comet passenger train makes a stop at Tin City on Jim Policastro's 3-rail 0 gauge layout that includes realistic scenes and trains as well as fanciful tinplate. Jim is a Section Gang member of *OGR*. Readers will see more of his handiwork in future issues.



Dinner for the Dinos

Scott Smith is an active participant who is involved with constantly updating the 0 gauge layout at the Virginia Museum of Transportation in Roanoke, Virginia. He enjoys creating new scenes and scenarios that will delight young and old alike. Looks like this Navy switcher has done more than simply attract the attention of its crew, and we trust they got away safely.

Construction Boom

There's a good bit of new construction underway on Robert Lang's 3-rail 0 gauge layout. J. Frank's IGA market is getting a new parking lot. A new structure on the right has its framing nearly complete. The house next door is getting a new garage.



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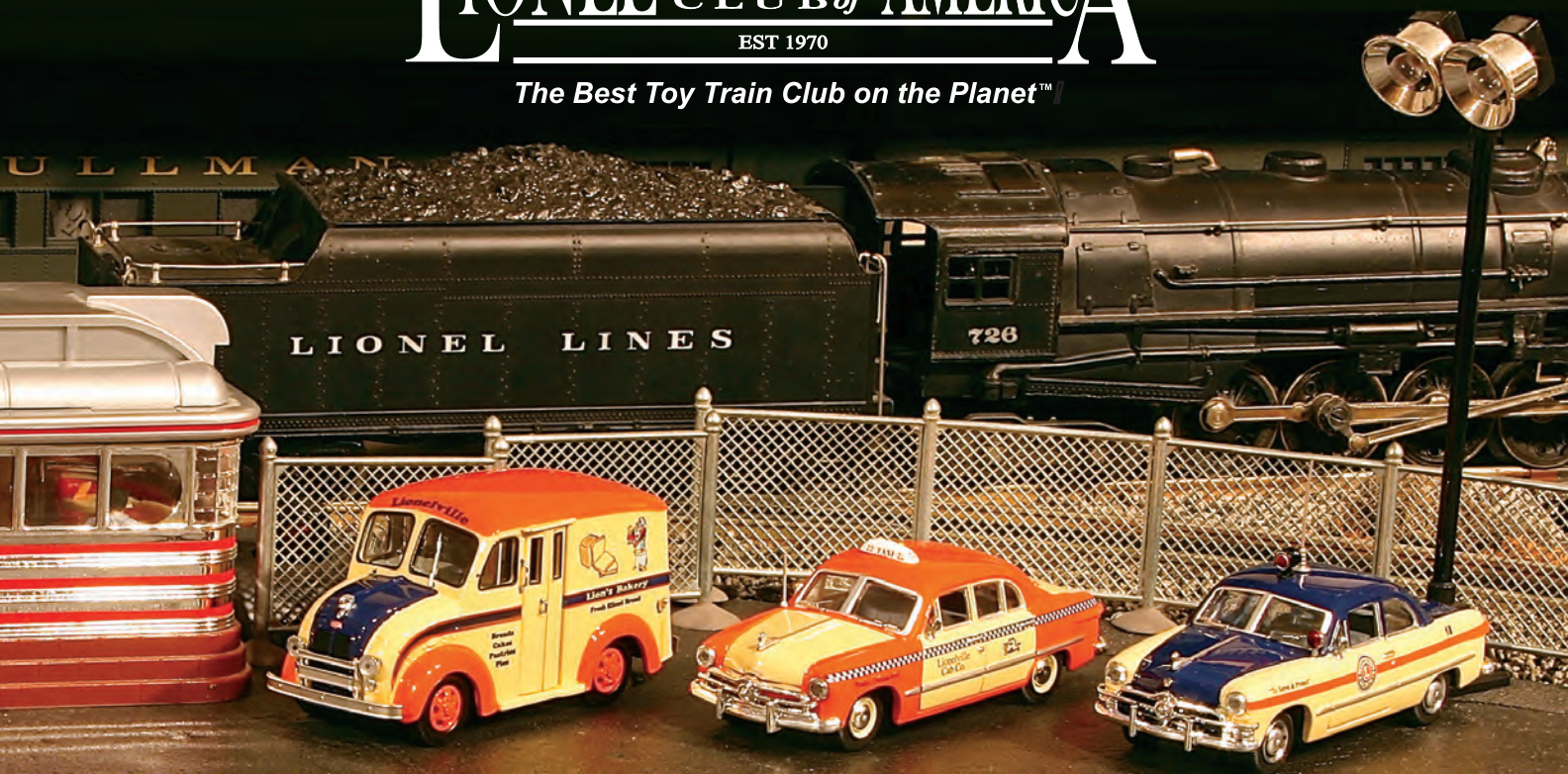


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RailKing Alco RS1 Road Switcher

Review and Photos by George Brown

For this issue, we reviewed two RailKing models of Alco road locomotives: the RS1 and the C628. The real RS1 launched the multipurpose diesel road switcher in 1941, which set basic design trends that are still apparent in today's railroad motive power. At the other end of Alco's locomotive production was the 2750-hp C628 introduced in 1963—the highest horsepower diesel locomotive made at that time. Late 1968 saw the end of C628 production along with the shutdown of Alco-Schenectady, the company's sole locomotive manufacturing facility.

With the model of the RS1 still sitting upright on its just-unrolled protective plastic wrappings, it didn't have the traditional appearance of a RailKing product. All of the model's handrails and separate grab irons pointed to the characteristic detail of a Premier line locomotive. But with a retail price in the low \$300 range, the 1:48 scale-proportioned Alco road switcher in NYC lightning stripe livery is definitely part of the RailKing product line—details and all.

Prototype Notes

Development of the RS1 was initiated by the Rock Island before WWII. The road's management wanted a branch-line locomotive that could work just about any assignment from yard, terminal, and way-freight switching duties to light passenger ser-

vice. The resulting locomotive was essentially a lengthened 1000-hp S-series switcher riding on type B (two axles, two motors) AAR drop equalizer trucks with a short hood added behind the cab. This short hood was to house an optional steam generator for heating passenger trains and also to protect the crew in the event of a collision. As was the control configuration of the times, most RS1s ran long hood forward.

Alco used the same 1000-hp 539T prime mover in the RS1 as in the early S-series switchers and also the twin-engine 2000-hp DL-series carbody locomotives. This turbocharged 4-stroke inline 6-cylinder diesel engine had a displacement of 1,595 cubic inches per cylinder for a total displacement of 9,570 cubic inches. Both the block and head were cast-iron. On the RS1, the DC generator and four DC traction motors were from GE, which was in a locomotive partnership with Alco until the early 1950s.

Built from 1941 into 1960, the RS1 saw the longest production run of any diesel locomotive built in North America with well over 400 units built. The three railroads in the U.S.A. that owned the most RS1s were the Minneapolis and St. Louis with 35, Pennsylvania with 27, and Gulf Mobile and Ohio with 24. The New York Central owned 14 numbered 8100–8113. Today, several RS1s are still in service on tourist railroads.

Construction and Features

The high level of added details on the RS1 isn't the only departure from the usual RailKing construction. Instead of the usual one-piece molded plastic body on a stamped steel frame, the RS1's hood and cab are separate moldings mounted on a die-cast frame. A separate clear plastic molding for the cab windows fits inside the cab.

Given the high cost of tooling and the extra steps necessary to prepare a die-cast frame for assembly, I'm surprised MTH used this type of construction on a moderate cost RailKing model of the RS1. Additionally and when compared to a thin stamped steel frame, the thick die-cast frame is considerably heavier and thereby adds weight necessary for better wheel adhesion with the rails. A safety tread pattern, which looks a lot like knurling on a mechanic's tool handle, is cast into the entire walkway surface on top of the frame. On both sides and ends, stamped steel handrail stanchions support the wire handrails.

Separate wire coupler cut levers and grab irons are on both die-cast pilots. Of course, the truck blocks, couplers, and side frames are die-cast as is the fuel tank/battery box, which also houses the speaker for the Proto-Sound 3.0 sound system. Speaking of the side frames, two easily accessible machine screws hold each one to the truck block. Removing a side frame makes replacement of a traction tire an easy task. Four of the eight drive wheels have traction tires, and two replacement tires are included with the model.

All axles turn in bronze bushings pressed into the cast truck blocks. As with any model locomotive, these bushings require periodic oiling for reliable long-term performance. To improve electrical pickup from the center rail when traveling across track switches, each truck also has two rollers.



RailKing RS1 Features and Details

- DCS, Proto-Sound 3, DCC receiver/decoder electronics
- Fan-driven ProtoSmoke unit with variable output
- Dual DC can motors with flywheels
- Metal worms and drive gears
- Four traction tires
- Owner-installed snowplow with screws
- See-through metal walkway above radiator
- Wire handrails and grab irons
- Metal handrail stanchions
- Wire coupler cut levers
- Separate horn and brake wheel
- Coil-operated Proto-Coupler both ends
- Prototypical rule 17 lighting
- Directional LED headlights
- Illuminated cab interior and number boards
- Freight Yard Proto-Effects
- Painted crew figures



For years I've been a fan of the lightning stripe color scheme regardless of whether the base color was black or gray. On our evaluation RS1, the satin finish paint and decoration are flawless—no surprise there. I initially questioned the yellow handrails, grab irons, and step edges, but they proved to be prototypically accurate according to color photos in several of my railfan books. In a nutshell, I found the RailKing model of NYC #8104 to be an attractive locomotive.

At Trackside

If you're a ferroequine audiophile (iron horse sound nut) as I am but have never heard the start-up sound of an Alco 539, you could be in for a treat with the digitized recordings in the RailKing RS1. Well, on second thought, even if you have heard that Alco-unique startup, you'll likely still be in for a treat. The recording of a real 539's rhythmic clanking, thunking, and then barking as it awakens from its cold and dark state could easily be a strong candidate for best-of-show in the diesel sounds division. To me, the underway chugging and also the sounds of the prime mover shutdown are equally unique and enjoyable. Out of curiosity and because I've never watched or heard a real-time startup of an early Alco six-banger, I compared the Proto-Sound 3 recordings with the sounds from several video sequences showcasing 539s on the Internet site YouTube and was duly impressed with the fidelity of the MTH recordings.

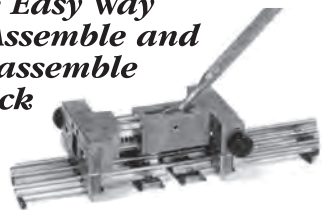
In motion, the RS1 is a quintessential MTH locomotive; that is, its starts and stops are smooth and predictable as is any speed between 2 scale mph and whatever track speed the locomotive is set to. As part of our standardized testing routine, the RS1 proved its mettle at a scale 60 mph with our standard train in tow. Actually, I preferred running the road switcher at a more realistic speed of 25 to 35 scale mph and working a train of steam-era freight cars that would have been typical on a branch line in the early 1940s. It goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway, with DCS control and the behavior of the operations-friendly Proto-Couplers, switching cars in and out of my industrial sidings was a ton of fun.



Manual controls for the smoke and sound volume are located on the underside of the frame just aft of the fuel tank/battery box casting. Of course, both the smoke and sound volumes are fully controllable using specific buttons on the hand-held DCS remote.

On the body, molded-in small details such as the door hinges and vent louvers are crisp and visible with the quality I've come to expect from MTH diesels. Inside the body are the motors, fan-driven smoke unit, and the state-of-the-art electronic package. As can be seen by the extremely low amperage and wattage numbers in the performance sidebar, this electronics package doesn't draw much current and, as a result, runs quite cool. As to the smoke generator, naturally its heater is a current hog.

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Given that real Alco prime movers, including the 539, had the propensity to generate heavy plumes of smoke, the prodigious MTH smoke unit was on its game in our RS1. Fortunately, the dense petrolatum vapor from the unit was white and not prototypically black. For O gauge railroaders who are not particularly enthusiastic about smoke emitting from a model locomotive's exhaust stack, the density can be adjusted to just about any level from high down to zero emissions.

From a slow crawl to highball, the surefooted RS1 tracked my Atlas O wide-diameter curves and switches without a glitch, as it did on a temporary O36 loop of Atlas track with turnouts of the same curvature. With the sound system turned off, only the whispers from the gear train and the wheels on the rails were audible. Yup, electrically and mechanically, the model of the inaugural Alco road switcher is a quiet runner.


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At the End of the Run

The RailKing RS1 provides a nice balance between scale fidelity with reasonable detail and a moderate price. And best of all, its moderate size makes the 1:48 scale model equally at home pulling a short train around a simple loop of track or working realistic switching or road assignments on a mega-sized layout. 

30-20248-1 NYC Alco RS1

Retail price: \$329.95 at MTH dealers or direct from MTH

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RailKing RS1 DCS Performance

(smoke unit: off; sound: on; speed control: on)

Length: 14-1/8" over closed couplers
13-1/4" between end sills

Distance Between Locomotive Pickup Rollers:

1st and 2nd: 1-1/4"
1st and 3rd: 7-1/2"
1st and 4th: 8-3/4"

Weight on Driving Wheels: 4 lbs, 11 oz

Power Consumption at Idle @ 18 VAC: 0.15 A, 2.7 W

Tractive Effort @ 18 VAC: 1 lb, 10 oz @ 2.8 A, 50.4 W

Minimum Sustained Speed @ 18 VAC: 2 scale mph @ 0.54 A, 9.7 W

Maximum Tested Speed @ 18 VAC: 60 scale mph @ 1.05 A, 18.9 W

Minimum 3-Rail Curve: O31

Power Transformer: Lionel ZW

Control System: MTH DCS Version 4.20; TIU powered by MTH Z-500

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RailKing Alco Century C628

Review and Photos by George Brown

Without a doubt, the 1:48 scale-proportioned model of the Alco Century C628 is a big locomotive. Our evaluation sample presented the same massive majesty as its Delaware & Hudson prototype. As to the handsome blue and gray color scheme, it speaks volumes for itself. As a side note, this Delaware & Hudson livery is my favorite for the big Century-series Alcos with the Lehigh Valley Snowbird scheme a close second. By the way, the C628 in Lehigh Valley Snowbird colors is also available in addition to the less-bright Southern Pacific Red Wing scheme and the downright austere Pennsylvania livery.

Prototype Notes

When Alco introduced its high-horsepower Century line of diesels in 1963 with B (four-axle, four-motor) and C (six-axle, six-motor) trucks and the 251 prime mover, the company had already slid into an abysmal third place in locomotive sales behind the industry's sales elephant EMD and the recent upstart GE. Essentially, the Century series was the company's last valiant attempt to remain in the diesel locomotive business, but unfortunately it was too little too late.

At the top of the Century line in 1963 was the C628 with 2750 hp from its model 251C prime mover. This welded-block, turbocharged V16 engine with 668 cubic inches per cylinder turned a maximum of 1050 rpm. As a side note, the 251 was more thoroughly tested and refined before release to the market than Alco's problem-plagued 244.

Competitively, the C628 was a monster at over 30 tons heavier and 5' longer than the biggest from EMD or GE at



that time with 250 hp more than its closest competitor. The C628 and its Century-series stablemates were engineered with a number of mechanical, electrical, and maintenance accessibility improvements over their predecessor units. As the best seller in the Century line, over 180 of the C628s were built between 1963 and the end of Alco production in 1968.

Unfortunately, the C628s still fell short in dispatch availability on a number of roads, especially those in the American West. For example, the Southern Pacific in 1965 was initially impressed with the big Alco's speed of over 70 mph and load-lugging power for service over the road's mountainous profile. As a result, the

railroad bought 25 new units plus the four demonstrator units that were on the property. But it wasn't long before the horsepower honeymoon was over, and all 29 of the C628s were taken off mainline freight duty. The reason was sorely simple: a disproportionate number of mechanical and electrical problems. In other words, the big Century diesels broke—a lot. By early 1970, the entire C628 fleet was leased out to the L&N, but they were all returned to the SP by mid-1971. Then in 1973, the SP began rebuilding all but two of the C628s for ignominious yard service with their maximum speed electrically limited to 25 mph. The remaining two were cut down into slugs.

On the other side of the country, the Delaware & Hudson bought 18 of the big C628s numbered 601–618 as high-horsepower additions to the road's extensive Alco fleet, which then totaled over 270 units. The D&H along with other roads, such as the Norfolk & Western, Lehigh Valley, and the Chicago & Northwestern, also bought new or used C628s for their ability to haul extremely heavy loads.

Construction and Features

Unlike the RS1 reviewed earlier in this issue, the C628 follows what I normally see in the architecture of RailKing diesel locomotives; that is, a single-piece plastic body mounted on a stamped steel frame. Details such as grab irons are molded into the body rather than added during assembly in China. On the upper front of the cab, two sets of white, green, and red lights are molded-in and painted to simulate the uniquely positioned classification and marker lights on the real C628s. Additionally, each of the side and end handrail stanchion assemblies is actually a single metal stamping assembled to the body and holding its wire handrail. On the clear plastic insert for the windows, windshield wipers are molded-in and are also clear. Held to the frame by easily accessible Phillips screws, the complete body assembly is easily removed for the periodic lubrication of the running gear. Ah yes, here's the good ol' attractive and nearly bulletproof RailKing construction I've grown to know and love over the past years.

Of course the pilots, truck blocks and sideframes, and fuel tank that also serves as the housing for the sound



system speaker are the traditional die-cast construction for O gauge diesels. I really liked the detail cast into the AAR drop equalizer style of sideframes and especially appreciate the realistic width and depth of the fuel tank. Each pilot casting includes a small snowplow, coupler cut lever, and air hoses.

On each truck, two of the three wheelsets are powered with the inner one as a dummy. As can be expected, the powered

wheels are flanged, with traction tires on the center pair. The inner pair of wheels, next to the fuel tank, is blind. One center-rail pickup roller is on each truck.

Accessible from underneath the frame is a manual control potentiometer for the sound volume, primarily intended for conventional transformer-controlled operation. This control also sets the maximum sound level when running the model using DCS.

RailKing Alco C628 Features and Details

- DCS, Proto-Sound 3, and DCC receiver/decoder electronics
- Freight Yard Proto-Effects
- Fan-driven ProtoSmoke unit with variable output
- Dual DC can motors with flywheels
- Metal worm and drive gears
- Four traction tires
- Wire handrails
- Metal handrail stanchions
- Separate horns and sand fill pipes
- Coil-operated Proto-Coupler both ends
- Prototypical rule 17 lighting
- Directional LED headlights
- Illuminated cab interior and number boards
- Painted crew figures
- Minimum O31 curves



On each side of the body, about a third of the total body length behind the cab, the single centralized air intake grille with a rain shield above it is prototypically correct for the full-sized early production C628s. However, I question the RailKing model's large raised box that extends above the top of the rain shield and the body. This large box with two grilles on each side of the body was the housing for the central air intake's aftercooler on the real 3000-hp C630, but not the 2750-hp C628. The roof profile of the C628 body is relatively flat with only slightly raised panels over the air intake area and surrounding the exhaust stack. Essentially, the two different designs for the central air intakes on the real C628 and C630 were incorrectly commingled during creation of the model's tooling, resulting in a body that doesn't accurately represent either Alco locomotive. Personally, I prefer the humpback profile of the C630 over the relatively flat-topped C628, so I rather like the RailKing model even if it's not prototypically correct..

Best of all, the Proto-Sound 3 electronics package uses supercapacitors to provide temporary support power for the electronics during system shutdown or momentary



power dropouts. There's no longer a power backup battery to have to deal with. Yes, there's the expected capacitor charge-up time during conventional operation, but to me the benefits outweigh the conventional power-up delay of up to 15 seconds.

Last, but surely not least, is the colorful satin finish on our evaluation sample. To be candid, there aren't enough superlatives to accurately describe the model that's currently standing on display between this keyboard and the computer screen. It's beautiful!

At Trackside

Because of its truck design with a blind pair of wheels, the RailKing model of the big Alco doesn't require wide curves. In fact, according to MTH, the model will negotiate curves as tight as O31. The incredibly short 1-7/16" wheelbase of each truck allows it to track tight 3-rail curves with the surefootedness of a mule on a narrow mountain trail.



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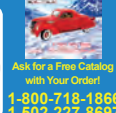


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But then there's the 12" distance between the truck bolsters, which are actually where the motors pivot in the frame. As can be expected, the C628 has a lot of overhang to the inside of tight turns, which I observed with our evaluation unit running around an O36 loop. The scale-proportioned fuel tank casting will most likely clear low-profile switch motors that may be mounted to the inside of tight turnouts. But be forewarned that this casting will not clear a postwar Lionel O22 switch motor cover that is on the inside of the O31 turnout or possibly even wider turnouts of the same style.

At initial power-up, the start sounds of the 16-cylinder 251 are accurate, but I have to admit they were not as much fun to listen to as the start-up noises of the Alco 539 in the RS1. But I can say that the C628's smoke production was in every way equal to that from the RS1, as expected. And as I've seen from a real Alco 251 over the past several years, the voluminous white smoke is accurate at startup of the prime mover, at least for the real engine's initial few minutes at idle.

On the wide O54 and O72 curves and crossovers of the editorial CCRR, the big Alco was as graceful as it comes at the head of a train of scale 40' and 50' freight cars prevalent in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. The

blue and gray D&H C628 was a pleasure to run and realistic to watch from my trackside vantage point as it passed by me. It was during these pass-by running sessions that the simulated Doppler effect from the Proto-Sound 3.0 sound system proved to be especially fun and fanciful.

At the End of the Run

If I were looking for a matched pair of second-generation diesels for operation on the editorial CCRR, would I buy RailKing C628s in either Delaware & Hudson or Lehigh Valley livery given the error with the air intake? In a word, yes! Without reservation and in spite of the error, I feel the RailKing C628 is a particularly handsome locomotive in its own right; one that runs as great as it looks. 

30-20242-1 Delaware & Hudson Alco C628

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RailKing C628 DCS Performance

(smoke unit: off; sound: on; speed control: on)

Length: 18" over closed couplers
17" between end sills

Distance Between Locomotive Pickup Rollers: 8-1/2"

Weight on Driving Wheels: 5 lbs, 1 oz

Power Consumption at Idle @ 18 VAC: 0.16 A, 2.9 W

Tractive Effort @ 18 VAC: 2 lbs, 10 oz @ 1.97 A, 35.5 W

Minimum Sustained Speed @ 18 VAC: 2 scale mph @ 0.38 A, 6.8 W

Maximum Tested Speed @ 18 VAC: 60 scale mph @ 0.93 A, 16.7 W

Minimum 3-Rail Curve: O31

Power Transformer: Lionel ZW

Control System: MTH DCS Version 4.20; TIU powered by MTH Z-500

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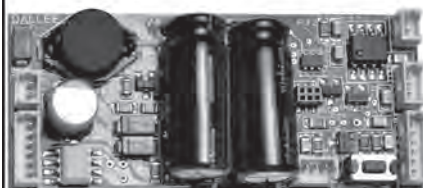
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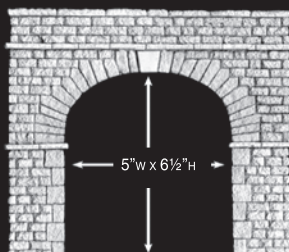
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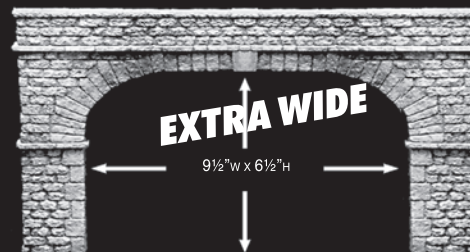
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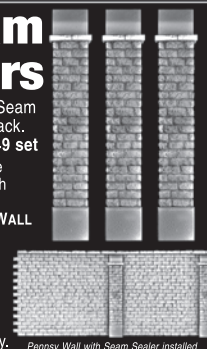
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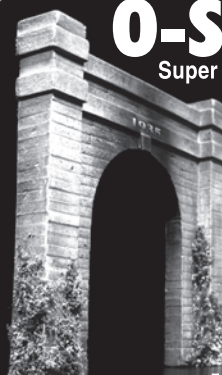


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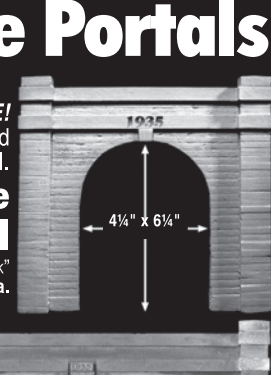
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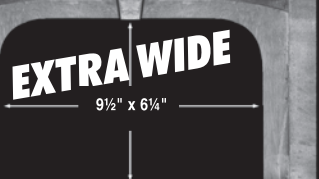


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The Moose River Valley Railroad: *A Dream in Progress*

Article and Photos by Bob Bennett

Our hobby can take many different forms. For a good number of folks who are still working to pay the mortgage, put food on the table, or get the kids through college, trains are a respite from those and other daily concerns. For younger modelers, trains provide a “break” from school work or the other electronic devices that are available. For those of us who have retired, we are now able to devote

more time to modeling and building—or in my case writing—while hopefully not alienating the other household members with our long absences. And then there is Norm Pullen.

Norm is a successful businessman in southern Maine. With diverse interests in areas like gold and silver, as well as a water company, Norm has always had a passion for trains and model railroading

but until fairly recently has never had a layout. The primary way that he exercised his hobby muscles was through the ownership of a well-known model train store called Norm’s O Scale Trains in south Casco, some twenty-five or so miles from Portland. The store features a wide variety of O scale and 3-rail products and does quite well with Internet sales as well as a fair bit of walk-in traffic, especially in the

summer with its location near Maine's majestic Sebago Lake. More recently, Norm has been expanding his inventory to include many more HO and N scale products in order to become a truly inclusive local hobby shop. However, the desire for a layout still remained, and a couple of years ago the Moose River Valley line began to take shape in a large attached space adjacent to the store. While completion is still several years down the road, things are progressing nicely. Some important scenes have been finished, and much of the track work is in place. And, fortunately, Norm knows some very talented individuals who have lent their skills and ideas to the project.

To define roles a bit here, Norm is the brains and resources behind this project. His ideas and attention to detail have provided the foundation for the layout. But there are also three primary builders involved in the construction.

Two of these folks are a very talented husband and wife team: Ed and Brenda Leslie. Ed is a professional 1:1 scale boat builder, so attention to detail and skilled hands are a fact of life for him. Brenda is also a very talented modeler. Her roots are in northern Maine's Aroostook County and are very evident in the modules the couple has constructed for the very active Great Falls Model RR Club in Auburn, Maine. Her model of the farm where she grew up is exquisite. One of Brenda's skills lies in the lighting of model structures and scenes, and these are especially visible in the roundhouse and car shop areas and in Raymond Town.

The other main builder is Al Dumais. Al is the former Public Works Director in Lewiston, Maine, and also spent time working in the signal departments of both the Maine Central and the Bangor and Aroostook Railroads. As Brenda says, "When there is a prototype question, Al is the go-to reference."

A fourth person with an important role in construction is New Hampshire artist Ray Bell, who has completed all of the scenic backdrop painting in the layout room.

The mechanics of the layout are pretty straightforward. The main benchwork occupies a space of about 25' x 52' and is about 54" off the floor. It is constructed with sturdy wood framing and risers, with armrests located along the perimeter. There are two duck-under where bridges cross the aisles. Lighting is done with ceil-



Three Guilford Geeps are seen pulling a heavy freight consist from the yard.



This rather nicely manicured hobo camp sits next to the abandoned hotel.

ing-mounted fluorescent fixtures, which can be "dialed down" to replicate various daylight and nighttime effects.

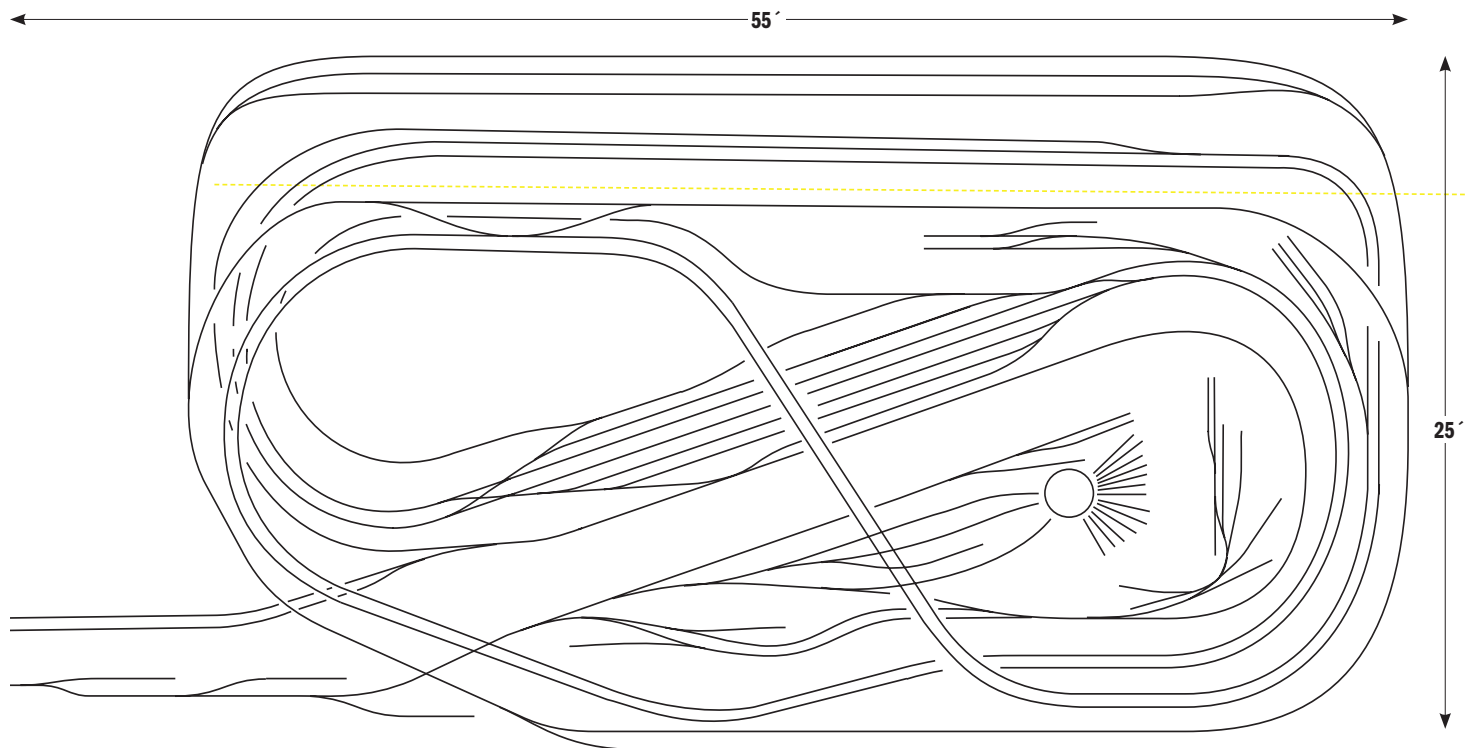
There are two staging yards for the layout, one sitting atop the other, located in an adjacent room and accessed through a wall opening. Each of these facilities can

hold two full passenger and freight trains on the upper and lower levels respectively and can keep up to four operators on their toes. Operation is controlled by an NCE digital command control (DCC) system.

Motive power and rolling stock generally portray Maine-based railroads, but



A new load of timber arrives at the Leslie Cabinet Millworks building.



The layout's 55' x 25' track plan was designed by the Vargas brothers, Armando and Dan.



The Never-Peel Paint Company could probably do with a bit of sprucing up if it wants to remain true to its name.



This Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes narrow gauge Forney operates on an On30 shelf layout connected to the main layout.

equipment from visiting roads appears as well. For example, there are some beautifully detailed Maine Central cabooses from various eras visible in yards and at the end of some consists. Typical BAR and Boston and Maine boxcars are also visible, and B&M and MEC E7s are seen alongside more modern Guilford Rail System diesels. A beautiful full-length version of the Boston and Maine's Eastwind, in its atypical yellow-and-silver colors that lasted only three years, waits at the Raymond Town station. A magnificent Union Pacific 4-6-6-4 Challenger sits at the coal-ing tower, and a variety of equipment from other roads dots the railscape.

The modeled era, by the way, is the mid-1950s, but Norm prefers to keep that time frame flexible as well. While there is a good bit of construction yet to be done, two areas are largely completed and deserve special attention. Brenda's attention to detail is crucial in both of these scenes.



Brenda Leslie's scratch-built church is hosting a wedding today.



This Moose River Valley switcher is towing a string of reefer cars.



A view down the main street of Raymond Town in the morning...



...and Raymond Town at night.



Cappy's Car Repair Shop keeps the rolling stock operational and up to code.



Young and old like the Gilpin Hotel.



The area at the entrance to the engine terminal is still unfinished.



The yard area in the foreground was built by Ed Leslie and Al Dumais.

In Raymond Town itself, the downtown area is finished. From the tracks and depot area, the main street slopes gently up to the rear with the adjacent sidewalks and businesses switching levels as well. The buildings, many of which are from Woodland Scenics, are minutely detailed with fully illuminated interiors and a multitude of activities going on.

The barber shop awaits customers with the pole on the front lighting the way. A bored employee in the Texaco station on the corner reclines while catching a few winks. On the front steps of Brenda's scratch-built church, a newlywed couple celebrates, and at the Gilpin Hotel, another young couple enjoys a fond embrace.

A ways farther down the layout lies the car shop and engine house areas. When I first saw the roundhouse, the Bangor and Aroostook facility at Northern Maine Jct., just outside Bangor, jumped into my mind. The model is a seven-stall behemoth, fully detailed and lighted inside. Welders' torches flicker, loco parts are abundant, and in the car shop a worker consults the



Norm's Trains retail store entrance is on Route 302 at Casco, Maine.



Norm's 1:1 scale Maine Central speeder.



The seven-stall roundhouse has full interior detail.



The city scene visible behind the roundhouse was hand-painted by Ray Bell.



Storm clouds are gathering as night falls.

shop dog about the next step to be taken in building a boxcar. Again, Brenda's artistic and modeling abilities are wonderfully evident. The aforementioned coaling and service area is also nearly finished.

The evolution of the Moose River Valley Railroad continues. Granted, owner Norm Pullen has the space and resources available that might be the envy of many of us. But with that said his dream of creating a miniature world that is minutely

and accurately detailed, which will be available for the viewing and inspiration of friends, customers, and fellow modelers, is exceedingly generous. His dream is to have this work rank with the gorgeous layouts created by George Sellios and others who have built miniature worlds of their own.

With the National Narrow Gauge Convention scheduled for Augusta, Maine, in 2016, Norm and company are already making plans to be open for

viewing. Visit <http://nngc2016.org/wp> for details about planned convention activities. Interested readers can monitor the progress on Norm's layout by going to the Norm's O Scale Trains website (www.normsosite.com) where they can see more photos and videos produced by the "Deere" team—that's Ed and Brenda again. They're really into those familiar green-and-yellow tractors, too. 🇺🇸



Chief Financial Officer Norm Pullen

About the Author

Bob Bennett was born, raised in, and is a life-long resident of Maine. He is a retired history teacher after a career that lasted 38 years. His writings have been frequently published in model railroad and historical magazines, and he continues to do research as a museum volunteer. Bob's primary modeling interest is narrow gauge doing the Maine Two-Footers in On30 and Colorado narrow gauge in HO30. He is building an On30 layout and considers himself more of a modeler than an operator. While freelanced, his South China and Sheepscot River RR closely follows Maine two-foot practices.

Fun Continues on Don Klose's Bellevue and Schenectady

Article and Photos by Jim Policastro



A New York Central Berkshire riding the newly installed Millhouse Studios transfer table.



Lionel Vision Line Hudsons--both the gray and the black versions--on the ready track.

Engine Facilities



Lionel streamlined Dreyfuss Hudson on a transfer table storage track.

Downtown Schenectady

O Gauge Railroading magazine first visited Don Klose's railroad back in the August/September 2008 issue (Run 230). In the seven years that have elapsed since then, much has changed on his Bellevue and Schenectady Railroad. The majority of the scenes have been reworked with new structures and added details, but, thankfully, the overall impression you experience on a trip down Don's basement steps has remained the same. The railroad remains a kaleidoscope of sights, sounds, aromas, and animations that draw you in. You still become a part of Don's world, and he controls your experiences in a masterful way that visitors do not soon forget. The aisles are still a tight 24 inches or less around the room, making it necessary for you to get right up close to the action. Don's scenery in these areas is still designed to be "forgiving" and able to withstand enthusiastic visitors as they literally immerse themselves in the layout enjoying one little vignette after another.

Serving Schenectady, New York, and Now the Jersey Shore

The premise behind the Bellevue and Schenectady Railroad is still that it is a division of the New York Central Railroad based in Schenectady, New York. The rich railroad history of Schenectady as a major destination on the former New York Central, as home to the General Electric Corporation and site of the American Locomotive Company (ALCO), gave Don much to model in his 20' x 32' basement. The major areas modeled include urban downtown Schenectady, the rural suburb of Rotterdam Junction, extensive engine facilities including a new transfer table, and an upper-level amusement park area. Since our last visit, however, the railroad has been "extended" and now links Schenectady with the Wildwood, New Jersey, beach scene. Don's quarter-inch-to-the-foot inhabitants really appreciated this opportunity to escape the summer heat of the city and bask in the cool ocean breezes of the Jersey shore. The populace in general is now much more relaxed, more tanned, and maybe a bit pudgier thanks to the boardwalk food concessions.



Here's a view of the Chubbins Square neighborhood of downtown Schenectady. The building at the far right is the Gazette newspaper building. The Donovision screen on the roof shows continually changing advertisements for local businesses.



A close-up shot of the Union Station area.

Downtown Schenectady



A new high rise under construction. Bill Bramlage described how he makes open girder framework like this in Run 283, February/March 2016.



Downtown Schenectady

The Gleason Building and the Foster Building, two of Schenectady's landmark structures. The real Gleason Building was destroyed by fire last spring.

An Emphasis on Realism

If you ask Don about his approach to modeling the railroad, he will sum it up in a single word: realism! Don has always prided himself on depicting realistically all aspects of the lives of his populace. His scenes range from the tidy well-manicured lawns of the suburbs right down to the gritty, sooty look of an urban downtown. His inhabitants attend church services, shop for the necessities of life (including model trains at Mohawk Valley Railroad Co.), service their autos, dine out on occasion, and work at General Electric, Tobin Packing, or numerous downtown retailers and industrial sites around the layout. But they also can unwind at Club Crystal or partake of many of the seedier aspects of city life. In fact, the official photographer of the railroad was cautioned about pointing his lens toward the windows of several of the more infamous downtown "hotels," lest he capture images not suitable for this magazine. The Homies brand of figures appears

extensively in these scenes mainly because they were designed with exactly such a wide range of lifestyles in mind. You might question how out-of-scale figures can convey realism until Don points out that many of the people we meet daily are, in fact, "bigger than life" in one way or another. Lately, Don has increased this sense of realism by paying special attention to the weathering of both structures and much of the rolling stock on the railroad. The talents of Steve Phetterplace (SIRT of OGR Forum fame) have provided most of the weathered rolling stock. Many of the realistically weathered structures around the layout were created by builders Jack Smith and Mike Lynch.

Downtown Schenectady

Don's re-creation of downtown Schenectady centers around a series of massive structures created by Mark and Maria Poklemba. Don would photograph these buildings, and the Poklembas would duplicate their facades in 1:48 scale, right down

to the distinctive window styles, roof cornices, and other architectural details. Don's downtown area has been featured in the local newspaper, even enticing some local officials to request a visit. Perhaps the local redevelopment committee could learn a thing or two about urban planning from the Bellevue and Schenectady. The importance of documenting our past was driven home by the recent loss by fire of the Gleason Building, which now joins the old Union Station as a historic building, which lives on only in 1:48 scale in Don's basement.

The Jersey Connection

An important part of Don's life has always been his family's annual trip to Wildwood, New Jersey. A week by the ocean would relieve some of the stress of Don's profession as a funeral director. Once again, it was the Poklembas who helped Don re-create many of the iconic buildings and concessions found around Wildwood Harbor. From the imposing Crusader Motel

Station Scenes



A custom-painted Weaver GP38 in Bellevue & Schenectady jade green arrives at the station.

Station Scenes



An MTH ex-Chicago Northwestern Alco-built 4-6-4 pulls into the station.



Interior detail in the Wildwood Harbor dining car.

right down to the tiny dipping dots stand, the sights and sounds of the Jersey shore have come to the Bellevue and Schenectady. The photos show just how enthusiastically some of Don's more infamous residents have can-

nonballed themselves into the beach scene. The city police department is forever grateful that the city's population now drops off dramatically from Memorial Day through the Labor Day weekend.

Evolution of a Layout

The Bellevue and Schenectady Railroad is living proof that a layout is never done. Every square inch of benchwork

Various Industries



Farm workers ready produce for the weekly downtown farmer's market.

Various Industries



More produce is prepared for the market as a K-line Plymouth diesel switcher in NYC livery passes.

Ray's Music Exchange doesn't really need rail service but is popular with the music-loving railroad workers, especially on payday.



It is somewhat appropriate that a trolley body whose days are numbered is seen spotted near the Henri Grusomme casket company.

was covered with finished scenery when we visited back in 2008. But that did not stop Don from ripping out one scene after another over the years, not necessarily in an attempt at improvement but simply because building and detailing is what keeps Don's creative juices flowing. That is what has made model railroading a lifetime pursuit for him and an important escape as he dealt with life's adversities. The latest of these, a recent bout with prostate cancer, has been met with the positive attitude of "let's get this thing done!" He had more important things to worry about, namely keeping that railroad moving and keeping his sometimes unruly gang of little people in line. 🚂

Wildwood Beach Scenes



An overall view of the harbor and some of the boardwalk concessions.



Big Kahunas surf shop is a popular spot.

Wildwood Beach Scenes



Stewart's outdoor deck is always popular with the tourists.



A harbor view.

Wildwood Beach Scenes



The tiny dippin dots stand.



This big guy's long reach will definitely be an advantage at the hoops game.



Deb & Don's Boardwalk Dogs concession could be a hint of what is in the future for the Klose family upon retirement.

Wildwood Beach Scenes



The under-the-boardwalk crowd seems to be right out of the 1960s.



This fish market supplies most of the town's restaurants and concession stands.



About the Author

Don and Debbie Klose with youngest son Tim. Don is a funeral director for Bond Funeral Home in Schenectady, New York. Debbie is a music teacher in the Schenectady school system and director of a church choir. Don is a member of LOTS, LCCA, TCA, and TTOS.



CREATE A TIMEWORN WORKHORSE

Article, Diagram, and Photos by Thomas Yorke

While surfing the Internet seeking an S4 locomotive for a detailing project I had in mind, I came across an interesting prototype: Landmark Grain S4 switcher No. 10003. This unit was used in South Charleston, Ohio, in the mid-1980s. Only a half-dozen photos of it were available online, so this article is something of a “guess” as to how this engine was rebuilt. It had been fitted with a Cummins diesel and was originally owned by the Ford Motor Company bearing serial number 81103. The nose had been cut out so a new radiator could be added and a new stack cut in just behind the grab irons atop the front of the nose.

Photo 1 shows my model, an MTH S2 switcher, and Photo 2 is one of the few good photos of its prototype, an Alco S4. I used styrene (primarily) to fabricate major changes that had been made to the proto-

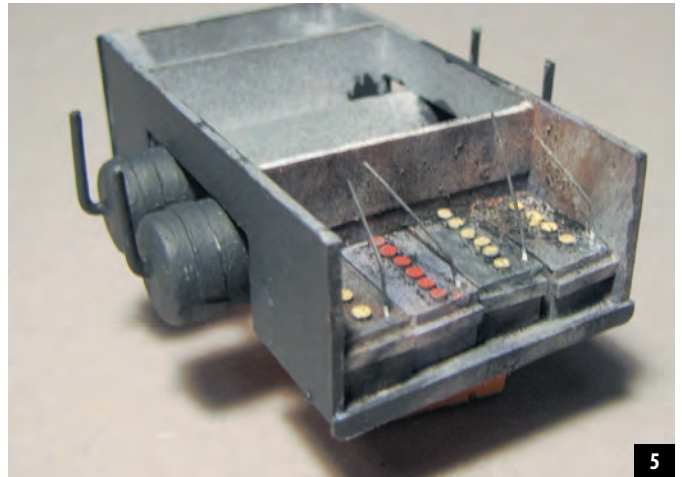
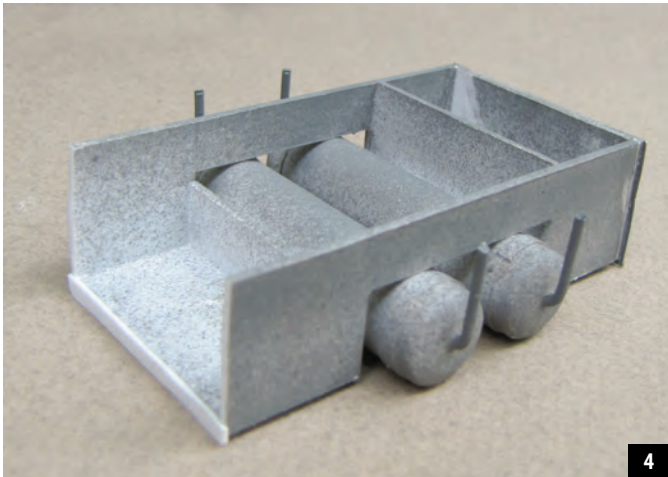
type locomotive including a fan housing, modified radiator, new stack, battery box, and a CO2 fire suppressor (Photos 3, 4, 5, and a Diagram). I also performed some modification on the pilots and changed out the couplers for Kadee “prototype head” #745 coupler units (Photos 6 and 7). My goal was to convert what started as the MTH S2 model in Canadian Pacific livery into a credible representation of this definitely less colorful Landmark Grain S4. In this article I cover the steps I took in painting and weathering this locomotive, post modification, to make it look like its timeworn and heavily used prototype. The previous and remaining photos should provide a pretty good idea of the effects I strove for and achieved. These same techniques can be used for painting and weathering any locomotive, consistent with adjustments made in some of the colors selected.

Disassembly

The first order of business is to disassemble the locomotive to the extent possible. In this case, I first removed the trucks and their pilots. On my MTH S2 model, this allowed access to the screws that hold the body to the frame. Models from other manufacturers will require different steps for the strip down process, but the goal is to get things down, as far as possible, to the basic components.

Painting

After all of the details had been either added or fabricated for mounting later, it was time to paint. The prototype was basic black with silver trucks and frame. The safety railings were white. However, this description is oversimplified. The prototype



also displayed the look of heavy use, covered in dust and dirt and streaked in rust. This is the most fun for me to replicate on my models. My philosophy for weathering is to paint the model as I would a painting on canvas, except my painting now is done on a three-dimensional surface.

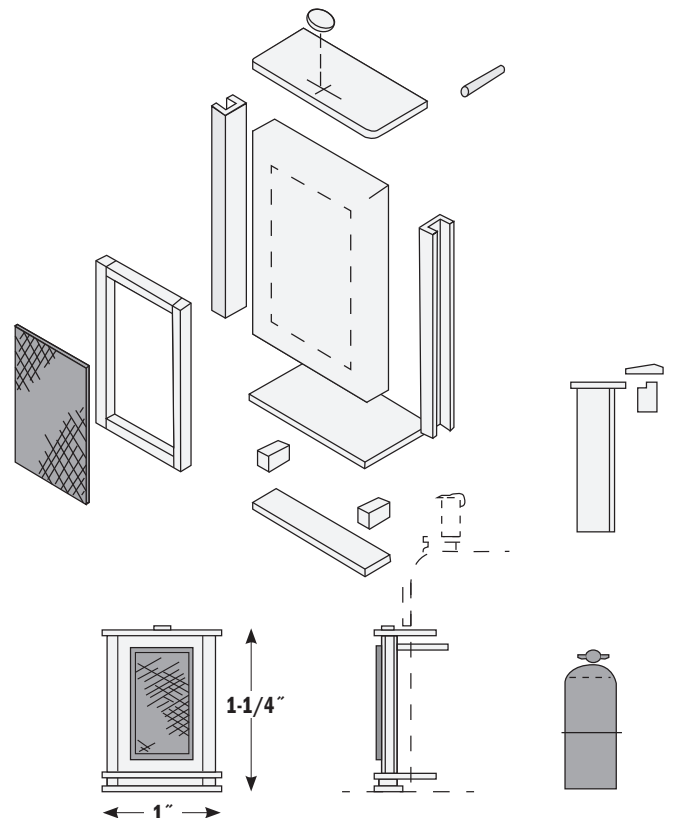
I use spray cans for the basic color application. If used correctly, spray cans give a fine finish to a model, but there is also a little texture to the paint just like on the real thing, which also helps the weathering stains stick.

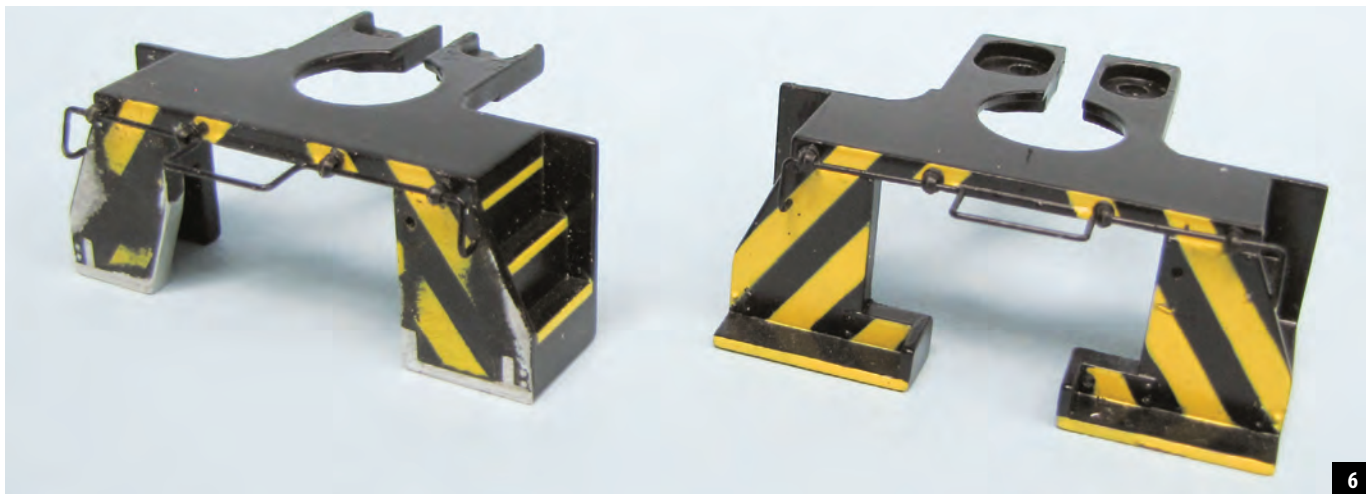
My weathering and aging is done by hand with brushes. I use both acrylics and dry pigments. After the basic color is applied, I brush on acrylic stains to adjust the colors and add age effects.

Weathering

There are three basic steps I follow to finish a locomotive. The first is the undercoat and basic color application. The second involves adjusting the colors with acrylic stains. Faded colors can be rendered, different colored panels added, and the basics of weathering applied. The final and most time-consuming step involves the details. This is where a small pointed brush is used to add chipped paint, dirt, and rust and to outline body panels to pop out the details. Some of this final work is very subtle.

For this locomotive model, I used a 1/4" paper punch and punched out some tape to cover the two headlight lenses. The cab, frame, battery box, pilots, and trucks were all painted Testors Chalk Board Flat (Photo 8). The frame sides, deck, and truck side frames





were painted in flat aluminum with a brush. The ends of the frame and the pilots were carefully painted in acrylic yellow with a small brush (the black is chipping off and the yellow is showing through on both ends). Stipple the yellow on in tiny patches. The coupler pockets also got this treatment. The edge of the deck along the frame gets tiny bits of yellow showing through also. The ends of the bolsters remain black, but there are traces of yellow there as well.

Now mix a batch of dark brown acrylic stain. Apply this over the black on the pilots, frame ends, and coupler pockets. This will add a tiny amount of brownish color to these parts. Don't do this in an even pattern but rather speckle the application here and there. Let some thin stain go over the yellow in spots. A chocolate brown acrylic slightly thicker stain applied in little splotches here and there provides a mottled look. This should be subtle. Again, get a little of this brown on the yellow as well. Both of these brown stains were added to the silver frame decking in a mottled pattern with little spots of brown added over every area that is black.

Next is a tiny bit of terra cotta brown acrylic applied here and there in tiny spots and dabbed with a finger to slightly blend the effect. Less is more here! Add some streaks and drips in a few places. Add a tiny bit of this color along the frame deck side and other black areas--just a little here and there for effect. As a last step to the pilots, I used some straight out-of-the-bottle white acrylic and dabbed a little onto each step front edge (Photo 9). Some steps get more or less than others. This is to look "chipped" also. The railings will get this

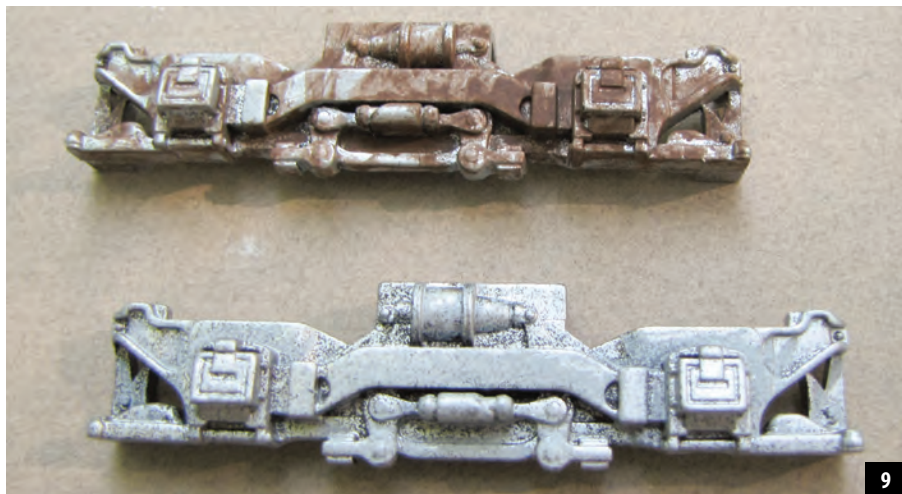
white, but wait until you are almost finished painting before doing that step. Dust a little dry pigment rust on the steps and affix with a dulling spray. This, for now, completes the pilots and coupler pockets.

The battery boxes and tanks were next. I used black for all batteries except one, which was gray. The filler caps, which are paper-punched thin styrene, are either red or yellow. Then battery cables were added with wire and painted black. The interior of the open battery box was painted a thin gray, and then some brown stain was added here and there. The box should look anything but clean! I added a little dry pigment white and some black in areas of the box interior and top of the batteries. Tiny pieces of white paper were cut out and glued to the battery ends as labels and then dirtied up a bit. The box exterior and tanks were then treated to several thin coats of brown stains as the pilots were. Some touches of terra cotta were added here and there also, including a liberal amount on the closed side battery door. Finish with a little dry pigment, white and black, and then seal.

The bottom side of the frame and the inside sections of the trucks were painted with the brown stain. This is a very dirty area on any locomotive and should be treated as such. I used a little full-strength acrylic Pearlizing Medium to appear as oily residue on some of these parts. Dirt and mud from wet tracks and roadbed should appear here also. The battery boxes should also get some mud applied. When you are satisfied with this area, you can then proceed to the truck side frames. These are brush-painted in flat aluminum enamel. When dry, over paint with some very light gray acrylic to lessen the look of metallic. Be a little uneven here and, while you're at it, do the same to the frame side rails. Now the brown stains can be added in a very uneven pattern. Some areas stay silver while others get browned over. Add some terra cotta and very tiny rust chips here and there. A little dry pigment rust will help out, too. Gunk up the journal boxes with a little Pearlizing Medium to give them a slightly oily look (Photos 10 and 11).

The hood and cab on this locomotive is a rather large, flat, dull black area that needs to be accented and the details heightened (Photos 12 and 13).

Mix a batch of thin Antique White acrylic stain. This does need to be thin. Apply liberally to all black surfaces, one



9



10



11

side at a time, and let that dry before going on to the next side. As the color dries it will blend in more and give a slightly gray look to the surface. Do not apply this stain evenly. Keep it subtle. If another application is needed, apply it after the first coat is dry. In this way you have control of the lightness over the black. Some areas will be more white or light than others. I must emphasize here again that this is a subtle finish.

The next step is to mix some thin brown acrylic stain. This will be scrubbed over all areas to give an uneven coating: almost a dry-brush application. Blending can be done lightly with a finger. Fingers are also very useful to gently wipe off a surface, leaving just a tiny bit of color.


Come back with another application of brown, but this time just a little less thin. Use a small pointed brush and apply areas of rust—frequently a dark brown color. Follow prototype photos of rusty locomotives to determine where rust appears and collects. Edges of panels, bottom edges, and even some complete panels can be rusted. Take your time with this. Mix a tiny amount of terra cotta stain and apply very lightly over some areas of the brown rust that was just applied. Lightly wipe off with a finger to leave just a trace of fresh rust. Drips can be added with a tiny brush and blended with your finger. Be subtle here!

As you progress, you will find that you need to revisit areas that you already have done. This helps develop a depth of color and finish. Adding more color to color develops depth. Areas of this locomotive were originally painted yellow, and some of this is showing through the black paint as it wears and chips off. Use a tiny brush and yellow acrylic and dab on some color in tiny spots. Add a little more than necessary because you will go back over it with more color when dry. Use some brown stain and lightly color the area around and over some of the yellow. Next, add some dark brown rust spots. Finish with a tiny amount of terra cotta. The pilots, the upper right front of the hood, and along the running boards get some yellow showing through the black. The horn is yellow. That's the way it was on the prototype! The new stack is silver with rust. The original stack was painted white, but much of this is gone and now is showing a lot of rust coming through. The railings, grab irons, and lift rings are painted white. Use a small brush and stipple the white onto the surfaces, not covering everything. These

railings are chipped from years of hard use. Apply a thin stain of brown onto the silver frame sides here and there. Add some drips of brown and a little of rust.

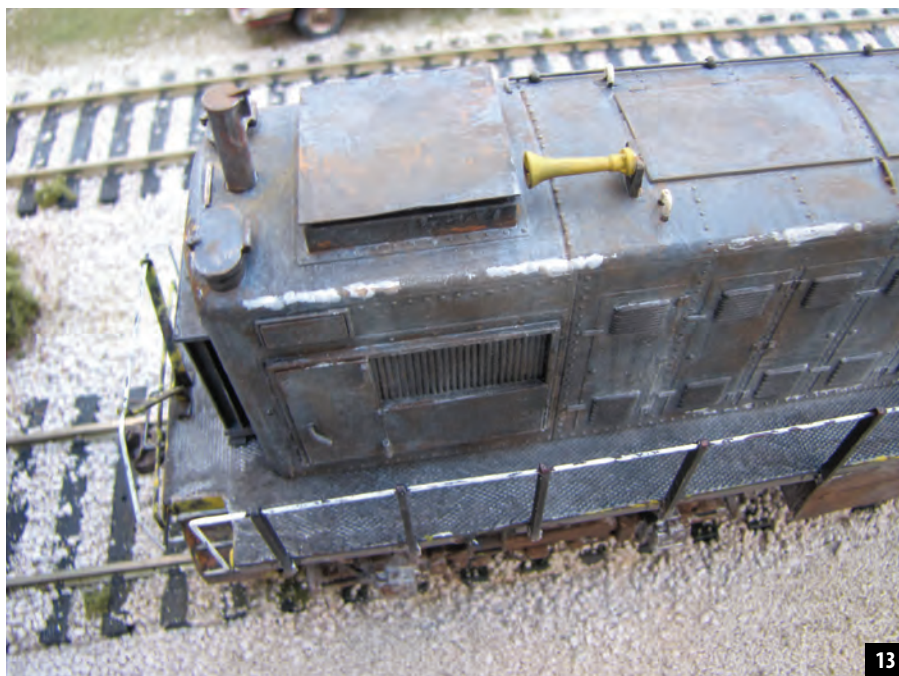
As a final painting step, some dry pigment can be used here and there to heighten the effect and pull out more details. I applied some rust lines on the cab sides to further detail these flat surfaces. The painting is now just about finished. There likely

will be some touchup required after assembly. Spray everything lightly with a dulling spray and let it dry completely.

Take your time detailing, painting, and weathering any selected locomotive, and you can produce a distinctive and different-looking bit of motive power to add to a collection or to serve a specific type of rail-served industry. And you'll have a lot of creative fun in the process! 



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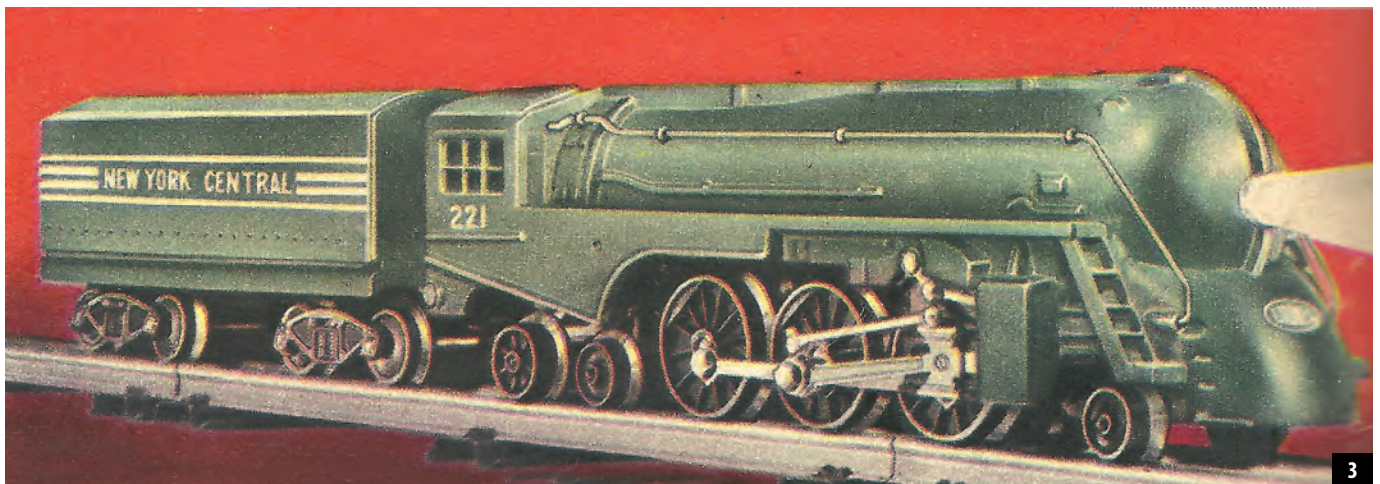
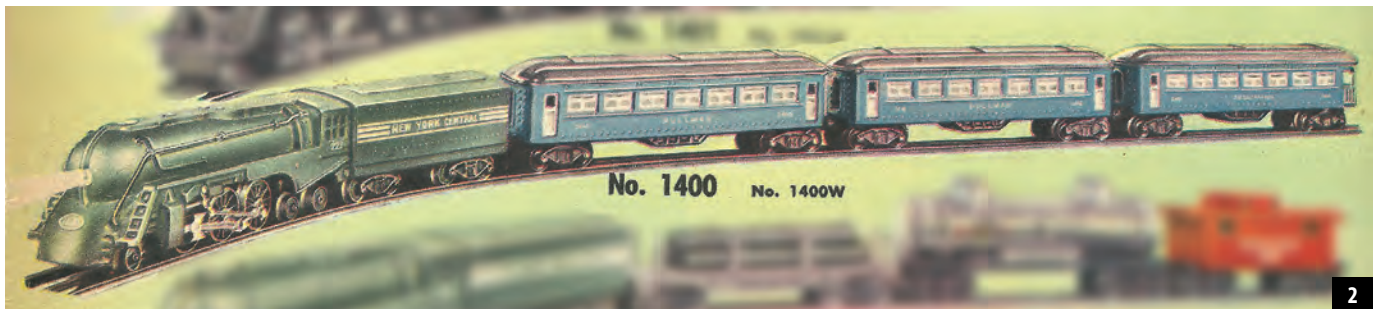
A Singular Little Set from 1946



In the fall of 1946 the United States was still suffering from the effects of a wartime paper shortage, and Lionel could not get enough paper to begin to print the number of catalogs it wanted to effectively promote its postwar line of trains. Getting the word out about availability and new features, such as knuckle couplers and puffing smoke in some steam locomotives, was critical because this would be the first time in almost five years that newly made Lionel trains would be available to the buying public.

An ingenious solution was to insert a sixteen-page catalog in the pages of the then-popular illustrated weekly *Liberty Magazine*, which billed itself as “A Weekly for Everybody.” The cover of the November 23, 1946, issue containing the catalog featured a familiar father and son Lionel theme (Photo 1). Notice the combination of prewar and postwar rolling stock in the painting along with a black steam engine puffing postwar smoke.

Thanks to the generosity of Dave Siburn, we are going to present you a singular little set from 1946: the No. 1400W.



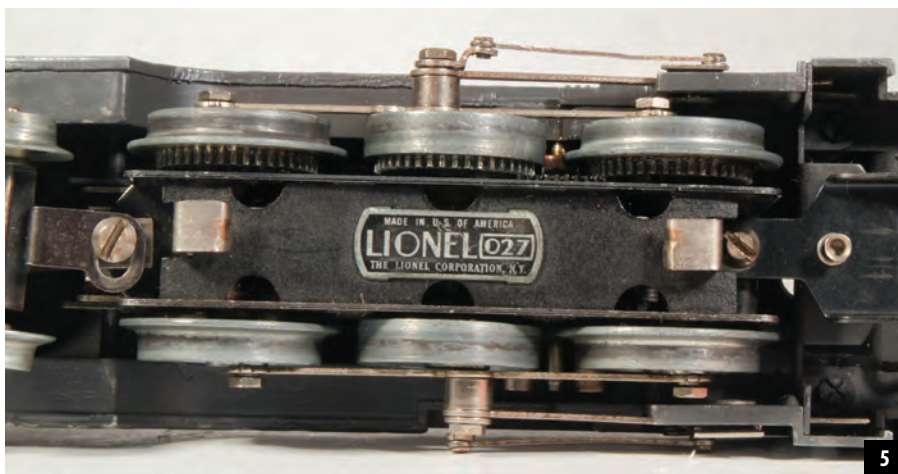
1946 Was an All-Steam Year

Motive power in the 1946 catalog was all steam; a large variety of black engines was displayed, including the soon-to-be-famous 20-wheel Pennsylvania steam turbine. The first postwar electric, the 2332 GG1, was not introduced until 1947, and the first 2333, Santa Fe and New York Central F3 diesels, did not debut until 1948.

Amid a sea of black, the No. 1400W was the only passenger set headed by a streamlined steamer in the 1946 catalog, and the 221LS was the only gray-painted steam locomotive Lionel produced during the postwar years (Photos 2 and 3). It would not be until 1957 that Lionel would list another streamlined steam locomotive: the No. 746 Norfolk and Western J.



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The 221

The new streamlined steam engine was referred to as The Empire State Locomotive throughout the catalog, without the mention of Henry Dreyfuss, the distinguished industrial designer who penned the lines of the real New York Central streamlined 4-6-4 Hudson that carried his name.

According to information in *Greenberg's Guide to Lionel Trains 1945-1969, Volume 1*, what became the 221 was planned very early during the war years, with an internal Lionel memo dated December 1, 1942, discussing a streamlined steam engine.



8



The 221 reflects the during-the-war heritage of this O27 locomotive with a 2-6-4 wheel arrangement and no provision for a smoke unit (Photo 4). The sliding shoes, instead of pickup rollers under the chassis running gear, also reflect prewar Lionel practice for O27 steam engines (Photo 5).

The body of the locomotive is highly detailed, with lines that are evocative of

the prototype Dreyfuss Hudson, starting with the front of the boiler that looks like a Roman helmet (Photo 6). Features on the engine shell include a large plastic headlight, semi-submerged fixed bell, and safety valves (Photo 7). The three-quarter view of the engine shows off the gray-painted body, full-length handrails, connecting rods, valve gear, and the aluminum driving wheels that character-

ize this early 1946 production version, which adds to the overall “Dreyfuss look” (Photo 8). Later 1946 production used black-painted drivers, and the 221 models of 1947 had black-painted bodies and drivers. Because of its looks and the limited number manufactured during the early part of the 1946 production run, the aluminum driver version is the most highly prized and worth the most to collectors (Photo 9).

The 221 tender is a postwar version of a simple, sheet-metal, box-shaped tender originally used on lower-line steam engines. The 221W pictured is a deluxe postwar version equipped with a whistle, staple-end trucks, and a coil-actuated knuckle coupler (Photos 10 and 11). Photo 12 is an image of the underside.

The striped New York Central decals on this example are a real find. Most tenders for 221s either have badly battered or restored decals. Both Dave Siburn and I think the ones on his tender are original. While the decals are in great shape, they have an aged look that is very difficult for a restorer to duplicate (Photo 13).

Pictured on a diagonal piece of track, the 221 locomotive and tender are an attractive combination (Photo 14).

An Opposing View of Collector Value

Dave Siburn did extensive research on the 221 streamlined Dreyfuss engines. His views go against the conventional collector wisdom about the 221, but they are well-reasoned and make for interesting reading. He contributed these comments on contemporary availability and values of the different versions:



"In 1947, the second and final year of their two-year production run, the locomotives were painted black. They now were fitted with steel wheels with nickel rims, which gave them a more familiar look to Lionel buyers."

"While doing some extended research on the 221, I found that the black version was actually rarer and more difficult to locate compared to the gray version. Apparently there were fewer black steamers made. I believe the reason behind this is that most steamers of that time period were black. The gray version was different and more interesting looking than a run-of-the-mill black engine. It looked more like the real NYC Empire Express Dreyfuss Hudson that appeared at the 1939 World's Fair, and as a result, more were made by Lionel."

The Rest of the Set

In addition to the 221LT and the 221W Whistle Tender, the 1400W set consisted of the standard grouping of three cars that came with late prewar and early postwar O27 passenger sets. In the case of the 1400W, it was two 2430 Pullmans and a 2431 Observation (Photo 15). The bodies were finished in an aluminum and blue color scheme that was identical to their prewar predecessors. The 2430 Pullman cars and the 2431



Observation in this set were carryovers of Lionel's prewar sheet-metal passenger cars made from 1938 through 1942. The car bodies were slightly modified to simplify production. A comparison of the postwar Pullmans and the Observation with their prewar counterparts shows some of the production differences (Photos 16, 17, 18, and 19). The postwar cars have their numbers and letters rubber stamped on their bodies. The prewar versions use plaques inset into the bodies for their separately applied numbers and letters.

Underneath, the changes are more extensive. For example, the postwar 2430 Pullman illustrated here rides on die-cast staple-end trucks with coil-operated knuckle couplers (Photo 20). Compare that with the tinsplate trucks and operating box couplers on the prewar 2640 Pullman (Photo 21).



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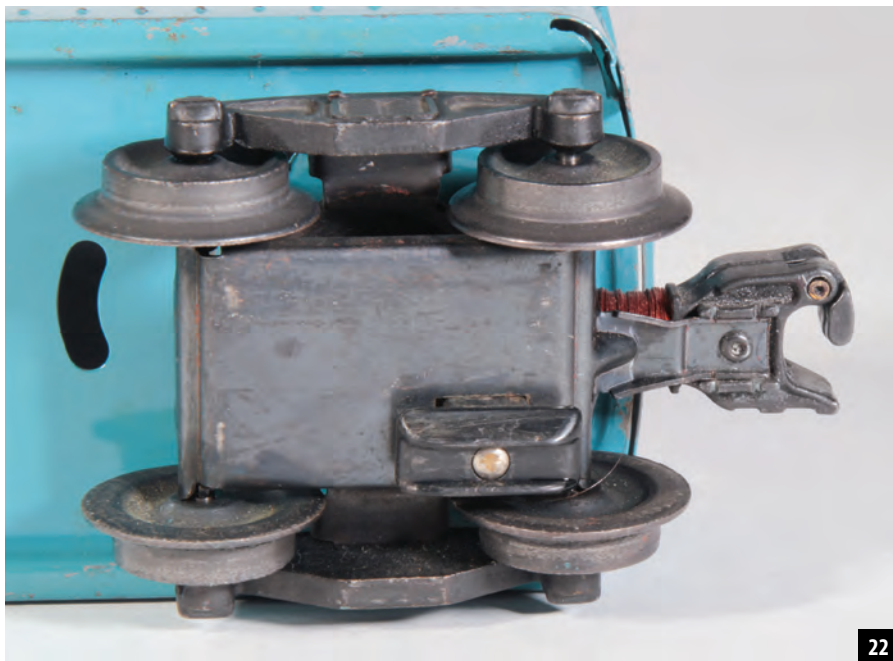
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Here are close-ups of the two truck and coupler assemblies (Photos 22 and 23).


The all-metal-style passenger cars from the 1400W set retained much of the toy-like charm of their prewar ancestors, and even though they were not illuminated, their blue and aluminum colors were flashy enough to complement the racy 221 streamlined Dreyfuss steamer they rolled behind (Photo 24).

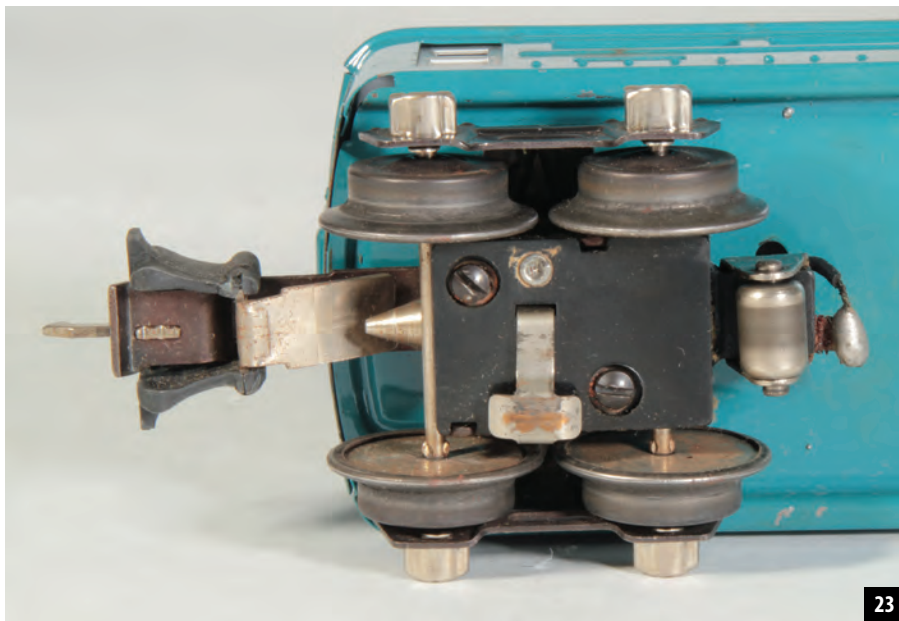
Final Thoughts

Although the tinsplate cars were soon replaced in passenger sets with more realistic-looking plastic cars, a large number of collectors, myself included, still prefer the look of the prewar-style metal passenger cars paired with the early postwar Lionel steamers.

The 221 streamlined steam locomotive seemed the perfect engine to bridge the gap between old and new in the postwar era. The streamlining was reminiscent of prewar tinsplate engines, yet the level of detail on the die-cast 221 body leaned toward the more realistic approach Lionel took in the design and production of its toy train steam engines after 1938.

However, the design was deemed not realistic enough to fit the product line, and the 221 only lasted for two years in the postwar world of Lionel.

Collectors continue to find the 221 a desirable engine, and operators still like its looks as prices for the engines demonstrate. The charm and uniquely sleek look of this locomotive stands out and is unmatched by any other Lionel offering of the early after-war years. 



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11-70118	Gerbert Products No. 2814R O Gauge Refrigerator Car	\$75.00
11-70119	Roberts & Oake Meats No. 2814R O Gauge Refrigerator Car	\$75.00
11-70120	Sullivan's Packing No. 2814R O Gauge Refrigerator Car	\$75.00
11-70121	Western Maryland No. 2816 O Gauge Coal Car	\$75.00
11-70122	Pittsburgh & Lake Erie No. 2816 O Gauge Coal Car	\$75.00
11-70123	Waddell Coal No. 2816 O Gauge Coal Car	\$75.00
11-70124	Blue Coal No. 2816 O Gauge Coal Car	\$75.00
11-70125	Clark Oil No. 2815 O Gauge Oil Car	\$75.00
11-70126	Calanese Chemicals No. 2815 O Gauge Oil Car	\$75.00
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11-70130	Long Island No. 2817 O Gauge Illuminated Caboose	\$79.00
11-70131	Southern No. 2817 O Gauge Illuminated Caboose	\$79.00
11-70132	Jersey Central No. 2817 O Gauge Illuminated Caboose	\$79.00
11-70133	Strained Vegetables No. 2814R O Gauge Transition Refrigerator Car	\$75.00

11-70134	Roberts & Oake Meats No. 2814R O Gauge Refrigerator Car w/Die-Cast Postwar Trucks	\$75.00
11-70135	M.K. Goetz Brewing No. 2814R O Gauge Refrigerator Car w/Die-Cast Postwar Trucks	\$75.00
11-70136	Gerbert Products No. 2814R O Gauge Refrigerator Car w/Die-Cast Postwar Trucks	\$75.00
11-70137	Sullivan's Packing No. 2814R O Gauge Refrigerator Car w/Die-Cast Postwar Trucks	\$75.00
11-70138	Pennsylvania No. 2814 O Gauge Box Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70139	Santa Fe No. 2814 O Gauge Box Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70140	Long Island No. 2814 O Gauge Box Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70141	Alaska No. 2814 O Gauge Box Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70142	Clark Oil No. 2815 O Gauge Oil Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70143	Calanese Chemicals No. 2815 O Gauge Oil Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70144	Shell No. 2815 O Gauge Oil Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70145	Cook's Paints No. 2815 O Gauge Oil Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70146	Western Maryland No. 2816 O Gauge Coal Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70147	Pittsburgh & Lake Erie No. 2816 O Gauge Coal Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70148	Waddell Coal No. 2816 O Gauge Coal Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70149	Blue Coal No. 2816 O Gauge Coal Car w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$75.00
11-70150	Chesapeake & Ohio No. 2817 O Gauge Illuminated Caboose w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$79.00
11-70151	Long Island No. 2817 O Gauge Illuminated Caboose w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$79.00
11-70152	Southern No. 2817 O Gauge Illuminated Caboose w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$79.00
11-70153	Jersey Central No. 2817 O Gauge Illuminated Caboose w/Die-Cast Post War Trucks	\$79.00
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11-80052	Southern No. 2613 Pullman Car	\$95.00
11-80059	Milwaukee Road 3-Car O Gauge 710 Series Passenger Set	\$339.00
11-80060	Milwaukee Road O Gauge 713 Passenger Baggage Car	\$119.00
11-80061	Milwaukee Road O Gauge 710 Passenger Coach Car	\$119.00
11-80062	Pennsylvania 3-Car O Gauge 710 Series Passenger Set	\$339.00
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10-1345-1	Blue #1134 Dorfan Steamer w/Proto-Sound 3.0	\$799.00
10-1346-0	Black #1134 Dorfan Steamer (Traditional)	\$799.00
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10-1347-1	Bonnie Blue #1134 Dorfan Steamer w/Proto-Sound 3.0	\$859.00

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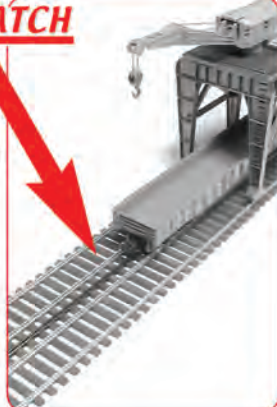
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Scene Along the Rails

The “J” and Me

Article and Photo by Dennis A. Livesey

In 1981 I bought the Lionel model of the Norfolk & Western J, #611. In 1982 restoration of the real #611 had been completed. I made plans to see it and drove from New York City to Roanoke, Virginia, on the second day of #611's new life and chased it from Roanoke to Alexandria.

In the trunk of my car was my Lionel model of the #611. I had brought it along in the hopes I could replicate a famous old Lionel publicity shot with its No. 746, the N&W #610, an engineer, two children, and N&W President Robert Hall Smith. However, I simply wasn't able to find the

time or an opportunity to do any setup with my Lionel engine and the real #611.

The year 2015 saw the real #611 back under steam. And once again I rode off with my Lionel model to Roanoke for a furious 2-1/2 days of riding and chasing what I regarded as the greatest passenger steam locomotive ever built. Again, no time and no opportunity existed for taking a photo. Whether by accident or design, I could not get near the real #611 when it was stopped.

On July 5 the train was back in Roanoke boarding for an afternoon run to Radford, and I had to head back to New

York—now! My friend Mitch was with me, and he is famous for searching out parking garages and other locales next to tracks to get elevation shots—you know, something different. We pulled into an open garage just west of the train and parked. We got out, and I saw the #611. I also saw the garage wall and, eureka, I had found my photo spot! In a flash of cardboard, Styrofoam, plastic bags, tripod, camera, and my beloved Lionel J, the model locomotive was positioned, my camera was on the tripod, and I was taking pictures. My 33-year dream—fulfilled! 📷



Here is the original Lionel promotional shot.

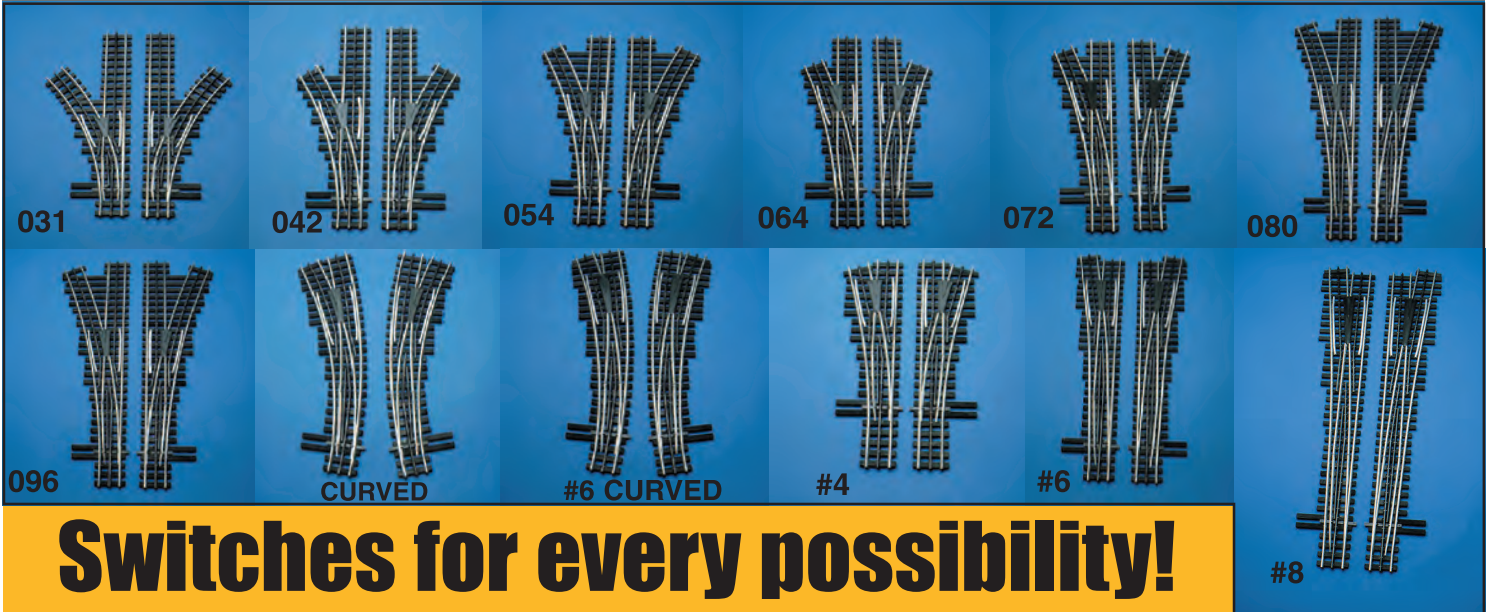


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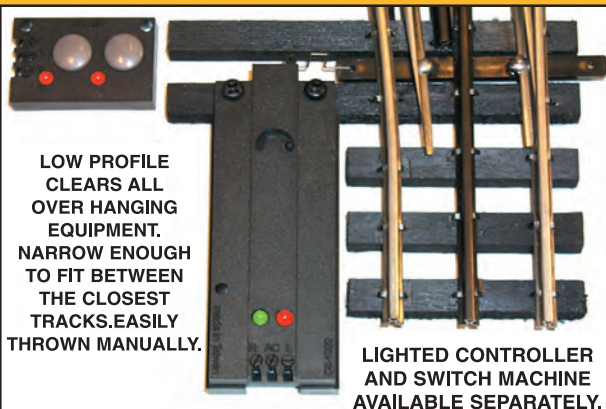
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Building a Layout: It's in the Details

There are a lot of qualities that separate a great train layout from a good or even average layout. But today, we're going to go over the one thing I've seen time and time again that really makes the difference for most of us. Sure, workmanship is important. So is good planning. But the most overlooked one involves the great finishing details that go into making a layout look real.

And that's a shame because that is the one thing we all have time for. Often, when a layout is "done" (if there ever is such a thing), we are lost in imagination while we actually run it. When that gets old, we might drift away from the project to other things.

But that is the best time to think about all the wonderful details you can add! Now is the time we can stop, take a long hard look, and begin the art of personalizing the layout and making it unique to *you*. This, I believe, is the never ending fun of the hobby. As a particular scene gets old to us, we can sit back and think of the things that we might add to change the whole scene that appears right in front of us. Here are some examples.

Take a look at the sanding tower in Photo 1. The importance of the detail that I want you to take notice of is the fact that there was always some spilled sand at the base of a sanding tower. The operator might get a little careless with the sand filler pipe (or filler hose, as the case may be). Maybe some sand would spill out and down the sand dome on the engine's boiler, landing on the ground by the base of the sanding tower. Just adding a little sand to the ground by the track where the operator of the sanding tower got a little careless is a wonderful detail that really adds to this scene. Also note that layout

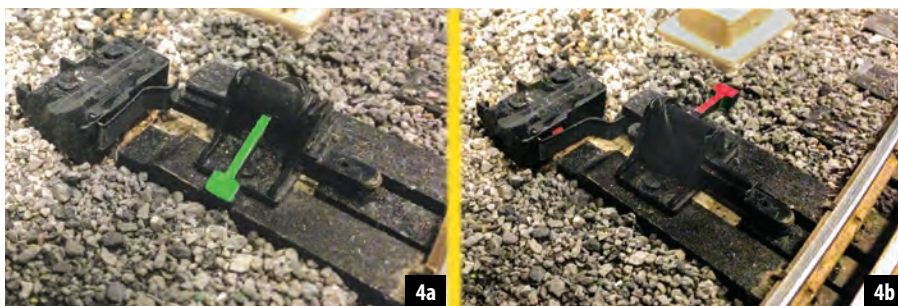


owner Bob Bartizek took the time to add a little rust to the steel structure of the sanding tower. Details! Wonderful realistic details!

Photo 2a shows a wonderful little device that can be added wherever you want to arrest the movement of a railcar. Even though it is shown at the end of a siding, it can be used anywhere. The prototype item is called “wheel skates,” which were portable devices that the brakeman seated on top of the rails. The railcar was then backed over the small hump on the right end of the wheel skate so that the weight of the car kept it arrested in place, either for unloading operations or for some other reason. Bowser sells these devices, which are made by Selley. This is a great detail to add to a scene like an operating log dump car left at a sawmill or a lumber loader awaiting the dumping operation. It can also be added to a lonesome boxcar awaiting unloading at a freight dock. Things like this add interest and conversation for layout visitors, prompting them to ask questions and become more familiar with the hobby. Details such as these also make O gauge layouts really stand out.

Photo 2b is not the same thing. These were called Nolan-type wheel stops and they were made to be more permanent. The prototypes shown here were called Model CS50. If you Google Mr. Detail Parts, you can find them. The O gauge models are made by Shapeways, in plastic. They are a 3D printed product, meaning that they are one of those technological marvels that come from original drawings but “print” in physical form to any scale desired. The real ones were meant to be mechanically installed on the rails at the end of a stub siding, as shown in the photo. Look what a marvelous detail they are when added to a siding track in a coal loading yard on Bob Bartizek’s layout.

Photo 2c shows some Hays-style wheel stops mounted at the end of a siding on my own layout. These little working models are made of metal by Tomar Industries. Their part number is O-803, and they come in a package of four. The prototypes were meant for more permanent applications than the ones shown in the previous two photos. The O gauge models work amazingly well. At first, I thought soldering them to the rail would be a great idea, but the soldering gun tip will melt the entire casting in an instant if too much heat is applied. I switched over to using CA glue, and that process worked like a





champ. A pair of them will even stop a locomotive instantly if it hits them. Using little details like these is so much better and more realistic than using clunky O gauge bumper stops. They also take up less space and they work better as well.

Photo 3 is a water filler standpipe, which we all have seen in the past. They are offered by Bowser, MTH, and others. The wonderful detail is the drain! Bob Bartizek made this from fine mesh screen wire and Evergreen plastic parts. The curbs are from round plastic rod, cut to fit, and the basin is a piece of .020 sheet plastic with the square mesh of screen wire added. Add a little rust paint to the screen mesh, and you've got a wonderful drain for your filler spout standpipe.

Photos 4a and 4b show a couple of wonderful details. The object in the photo is a Caboose Industries #208S ground throw, which can be added to any Ross Custom Switches or GarGraves track turnout. The problem has always been that it is somewhat difficult to determine at a glance which way the switch is thrown. By just adding either red or green paint to the switch lever, one can tell at a glance if the switch is thrown for straight or turnout position by simply looking at the exposed color!

But the big detail Bob Bartizek came up with takes care of the problem with mechanical switch stands if you have a remote control panel that needs to show the yard master which way even the mechanical switches are thrown. The electric switch machines will leave their own indicator light to show the position of the switch. What Bob did was to mount a nearly invisible sub-mini electric lever switch right at the end of the switch throwbar. The physical movement of the track switch throwbar will engage the lever of the electric lever switch, allowing you to electrically activate anything of your choosing by simply throwing the switch bar on the Caboose Industries ground throw. What a great mechanical idea disguised by the optical addition of the painted switch lever! It actually steers your eye to the switch lever to the point that the electrical lever switch is nearly invisible.

Here's a guy in Photo 5 who just wants to get warm between jobs in the yard on a cold day. He has "diverted" a little coal--possibly from a steam tender or a coal hopper--with his trusty shovel. He has also procured a couple of steel drums, one of which looks like he is going to get a fire going in it to give him someplace to warm

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10

his hands. Or maybe he can use that coal in the stove inside his work shack. He is sitting on some ties made from leftover balsa or bass wood and then stained with something like black shoe polish to look like some spare creosote ties. The fellow is an Artista figure, and the coal shovel and drums are available from Bowser or Selley.

Photo 6 is even easier. That is a leftover wheel flange rail from a switch. They are already formed and make excellent junk beside the yard tracks, particularly near a switch. Just paint them up in a rust color, and they become a wonderful detail. A detail like this is a perfect example of what might be regarded as junk in one layout builder's eye but a nice scenic touch in another's.

In Photo 7 are some more leftover ties and a couple of yard workers who are taking a break. Bob makes a point to always select figures in static poses. That way, he says, it doesn't look wrong when you look over at them later and they still haven't moved. They're still talking or resting!

Photo 8 is a plastic luggage cart like what you may find in a Walther's station kit or as an individual part from Selley (again sold by Bowser). The wonderful luggage is from a Woodland Scenics blister pack of luggage pieces, and these items come perfectly painted, looking already this good when placed on a luggage cart. Woodland Scenics is a great place to find highly detailed and painted scenic layout details.

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Don't forget to Google places like Matchbox Models of Yesteryear (Photo 9). The Pennsylvania Railroad Ford pickup truck, complete with rail wheels and detailed truck bed parts, came just like you see it. You may have difficulty finding this exact truck since they are made in somewhat limited runs, but Matchbox is a great source to find detailed vehicles that will fit your layout.

A fast freight goes swooping by the West Valley station on Bob Bartizek's layout, which is definitely an eye-catching scene here in Photo 10. But it all goes unnoticed by the two pigeons perched on the peaked roof of the train station. Arttista makes the painted pigeons, which can be supplemented by some less expensive plastic ones made

by Model Tech Studios in unpainted form. But, as Bob points out, you have the Arttista ones that can be used as perfect models of pigeon colors. A little time, some paints from Hobby Lobby, and you can add pigeons to your layout at will, time permitting. Such tiny details as this are great for close-up places where you know your layout visitor's eye is sure to catch them.

Photo 11 shows what you can do if you have an odd-shaped, funny little corner on your layout that is otherwise unused. The track for the gondola is right on the edge of the layout (not visible at the bottom of the photo). The addition of some fencing from Rusty Stumps (part D2502, shown here) and various junk piles from Model Tech

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O scale Junk Piles make a nice little siding industry where junk is waiting to be tossed into a waiting gondola car someday. The simple addition of a sign on the fence makes it the scrap yard of an unseen industry. Don't forget to add some tufts of weeds to complete the scene. What a great detail to put on an otherwise unused corner of your layout!

Photo 12 shows little piles of details on a freight dock, like sacks of flour or barrels of just about anything waiting to be put on board a boxcar. The addition of a couple of resting guys sitting around on the goods adds a wonderful little detail to an otherwise boring freight dock.

Here's a nice little cattle pen detail on Bob Bartizek's layout (Photo 13). He scratchbuilt this from balsa parts and stained them all with shoe polish. I think this can even be added to the loading ramps on the Lionel horse corral to make that accessory look much more scale in appearance and very believable. I think I'll add a modification like this to my operating horse corral when the time comes. That's the best part about the detailing process. As a layout builder, I can have a working model of the cattle or horse corral, but I can add this to it anytime, as time permits. Such detail additions as this keep the layout from growing old.

All along Bob's trestle are concrete foundations like these added to the bottom of the trestle bents. It turns out, these concrete foundations are actually leftover 2x4s that held up the trestle track until the mountains and gorges were actually built many years after the layout was up and running! Once Bob knew where the valley floor was going to be, he simply made trestle bents to fit perfectly between some point above the now-visible valley floor and the track above. He then sawed off the 2x4 supports, did a little filing here or there, and painted the resulting 2x4 stump to be the concrete foundation for the trestle (Photo 14). Nice touch!

These are just a few of the things I've documented, but there is certainly no end to the possibilities. The only thing limiting us is our own imagination. Do you have some detail ideas that you've implemented on your layout? If you would like to share them, shoot a cell phone photo or other photo and send them along to me at jim@ogaugerr.com. Maybe I can include them in a future "Backshop." I'd love to see *your* ideas! 



12



13



14

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Lou's Café

As I wrote in Shift in Run 281 "Helper Engine," much of today's O gauge railroading hobby is centered on the creation of Lilliputian ecospheres for ready-to-run trains to pass through. My 3-rail O gauge layout in the early 1950s doesn't count on my hobby resume because that was too long ago. To be candid, I don't remember much about building it and the scenery other than having to frequently rebuild the small valley that our family cat adopted as her nap pad and toy box. With considerable amusement, she would slap, chase, and pounce on the lightweight cardboard buildings and smaller pieces such as plastic light poles and road signs.

Much more recently, my first CCRR layout with traditional tubular track and Lionel switches was the archetypical toy train layout, so realistic structures were definitely not part of that scene. Only recently with my second floor-borne layout of Atlas track have a select few realistic structures and dioramas found their way into my train room at trackside or on display shelves.

In my writings and photography for "Product Showcase" and "Product Reviews," I've worked with a number of model structures from various manufacturers or importers. But until about two weeks ago, I had neither seen nor worked in real time with Ameri-Towne kits or the recently introduced Ameri-Builds by Ameri-Towne buildings. So out of sheer curiosity, I called Cari at the OGR World Headquarters and ordered both a kit and the corresponding ready-built building for a close look.

My first prime-time-live contact with Lou's Café, one of six Ameri-Builds structures assembled and custom decorated from an Ameri-Towne kit of the same name, was through the window of its colorful box. Out of the box, the three-story building had a 5-3/4" by 6-1/4" footprint. A molded gray plastic detached sidewalk measuring 5-3/4" by 2" was included for the

storefront. Each of the Ameri-Builds buildings is basically 9" tall plus the height of a vertical cornice if installed. In a nutshell, the simulated brick building projected the look of just about any old urban neighborhood structure, especially neighborhoods in the Northeast or Midwest. Given the photos within the Ameri-Builds ad in this issue, that wasn't surprising to me.

However, what I did find surprising was the structure's nearly two-pound weight. My examining Lou's Café quickly explained the heft of both kit and ready-built versions. Each of the four walls is a 1/4" thick monolithic polystyrene molding with all the brick, window, and door details molded into it. Basically, the mass of an individual wall is not unlike that of a rectangular dinner plate. Had all the structures on my boyhood layout been as heavy and solid as the ready-built Lou's Café, there is no way our cat could have rearranged them. In fact, if three or more of the Ameri-Builds structures were set side by side along my layout's main street back then, that fretless feline could have napped on top of them—they would have easily supported her.

On the topic of being solid, all four walls and the roof on the Ameri-Builds are assembled by hand using hot glue at each juncture. The 5-3/8" square roof, which measures 1/8" thick at the edges, provides the right-angle rigidity for the walls. No floor exists in either the kit or built-up versions.

Each ready-made structure is custom-decorated and assembled by an O gauge railroader, whose layout was featured in a previous issue. In an e-mail interchange with the builder, he explained to me that he initially spray paints all the exterior walls to represent the dull surface of traditional red brick. Once the paint has dried, the walls are then treated to simulate the mortar between the bricks. Later, the window and door treatments are painted individually as are the trim elements on the storefront and also the vertical cornice, if one is included as part of the building. The final steps include installation of the plastic window glazing and preprinted interior window treatments, assembly of the walls and roof, and installation of the lamp over the front doorway plus lighting inside a window on the second and third floors. By the way, these incandescent light bulbs run on 12–16 volts from any AC transformer or DC power pack for model trains. For a






realistically soft lighting treatment, I preferred the low end of the voltage range from my old 50-watt Lionel/MPC transformer.

Although each of the Ameri-Builds is fully finished, it can be further decorated or accessorized with posters, signs, benches, newspaper boxes, figures, or whatever to suit its owner and hobbyist. (By the way, the '41 Ford in the photo is not included with the structure.) Ameri-Towne detail parts such as additional sidewalks, loading dock, or rooftop water tank are also available and can be added to the building for further customization.

One side wall of each building has windows while the other is solid brick. That way, the building can be set as a corner structure or in the middle of the block. My sample building, Lou's Café, has its window wall on the right side. Other buildings in the Ameri-Builds series have window walls on their left or right sides, depending on the model.

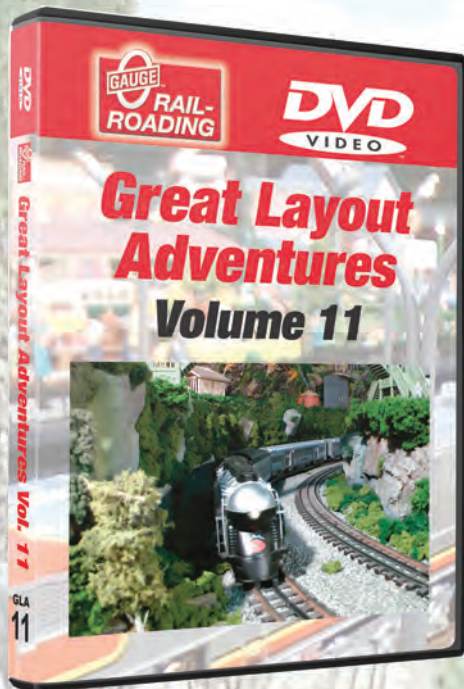
On the back wall are personnel and loading doors plus a window on each of the upper two floors. For larger downtowns with more than one row of buildings, two rows can be placed back to back, or they can have a service alley between them, which can also lead to additional detailing opportunities.

Each of the three-story Ameri-Builds structures lists for \$129.95 while its corresponding kit is \$34.95 at hobby retailers or directly from OGR's web store. As a hobbyist who, over the years, has built a large number of kits of various types, I do not consider the \$95 premium for the custom-built and ready-to-install structure as out of line. In fact, after purchasing the required paint, glue, and tools to build and paint a kit, the price differential would

likely narrow considerably. And then there's that unavoidable intangible of time to do the project. For me to create a structure comparable to the ready-built Lou's Café sample on my desk, I estimate at least four hours of hands-on time if all went well; that is, if I didn't have to do anything over to either correct a goof or because I changed my mind on how I wanted the finished building to look. But if I used several fully finished Ameri-Builds structures to create my own downtown on a layout, I could then devote my time and imagination to gathering and placing the small details that make an O gauge railroad layout something special and unique. 



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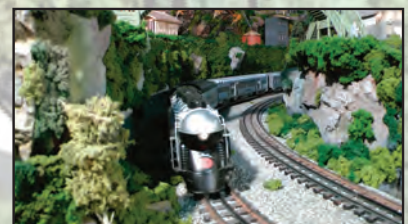
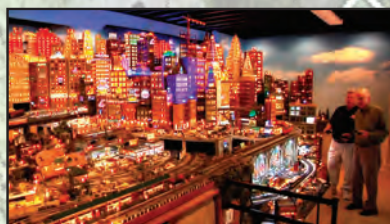
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CANTON, GA – Second Annual Southwest 2-Rail O Scale Train Swap Meet, Mason Law Firm Building, 160 S. Church St., north of Atlanta. 10a-2p, Adm: free 3' table to first 12 requests, operating 2-rail layout. Info: Dan Mason, 770-337-5139, daniel@southernscalers.com, www.southernscalers.com.

February 21, 2016

KITTANNING, PA – Train & Toy Show, Township Volunteer Fire Hall, 13126 St. Rt. 422 (3.2 miles east of Kittanning). 10a-4p, Adm: \$3, 12 and under free. Info: David Campbell, 734 Freeport Rd., Butler, PA 16002, 724-352-1113.

March 13, 2016

ALTOONA, PA – Alto Model Train Museum Association Model Train Swap Meet, Blair County Center, 1 Convention Center Blvd. 9a-2p, Adm: \$5, under 12 free, over 150 tables, largest show between Pittsburg and York. Info: Ron Kennedy, 815-696-9671, ronjane@atlanticfbb.net, Greg Miller, 814-695-3246.

April 9, 2016

ST. CLOUD, MN – Granite City Train Show, National Guard Armory, 1710 Veteran's Dr. 10a-3p, Adm: \$6, 10 and under free. Buy/sell/trade, operating displays, door prizes, food available. Info: 320-255-0033, edwardolson@cloudnet.com, www.GraniteCityTrainShow.com.

DELAND, FL – 55th Florida Railfair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, Tommy Lawrence Bldg. SR 44 and I-4 (Exit 118). Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Charles Miller, 3106 N. Rochester St., Arlington, VA 22213, 703-536-2954, www.gserr.com, rrshows@aol.com.

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April 16, 2016

COLUMBUS, OH – 59th Buckeye Model Train & Railroad Artifacts Show, Ohio Expo Center, Lausche Bldg. 9a-4p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Gordon Hartranft, 58 Creed Circle, Campbell, OH 44405, 330-755-1914, nlion02@aol.com, www.gserr.com.

April 24, 2016

HAWLEY, PA – Hawley Fire Dept. Model Train Show & Sale, 17 Columbus Ave. 9a-3p, Adm: \$3, under 12 free w/adult. Info: Bill Dolling, 618 Fern St., Hawley, PA 18428.

June 4-5, 2016

OMAHA, NE – NE-IA Railroaders 45th Train & Toy Show, Ralston Arena, 7300 Q St., Omaha, NE 68127. Sat. 9a-4p, Sun. 9a-2p, Adm: \$6, under 12 free. Info: Bob Schaffer, 402-253-8885, rgsmercman@gmail.com, Ron Bond, 402-292-3392, ronsuzbone@cox.net. Venders wanted.



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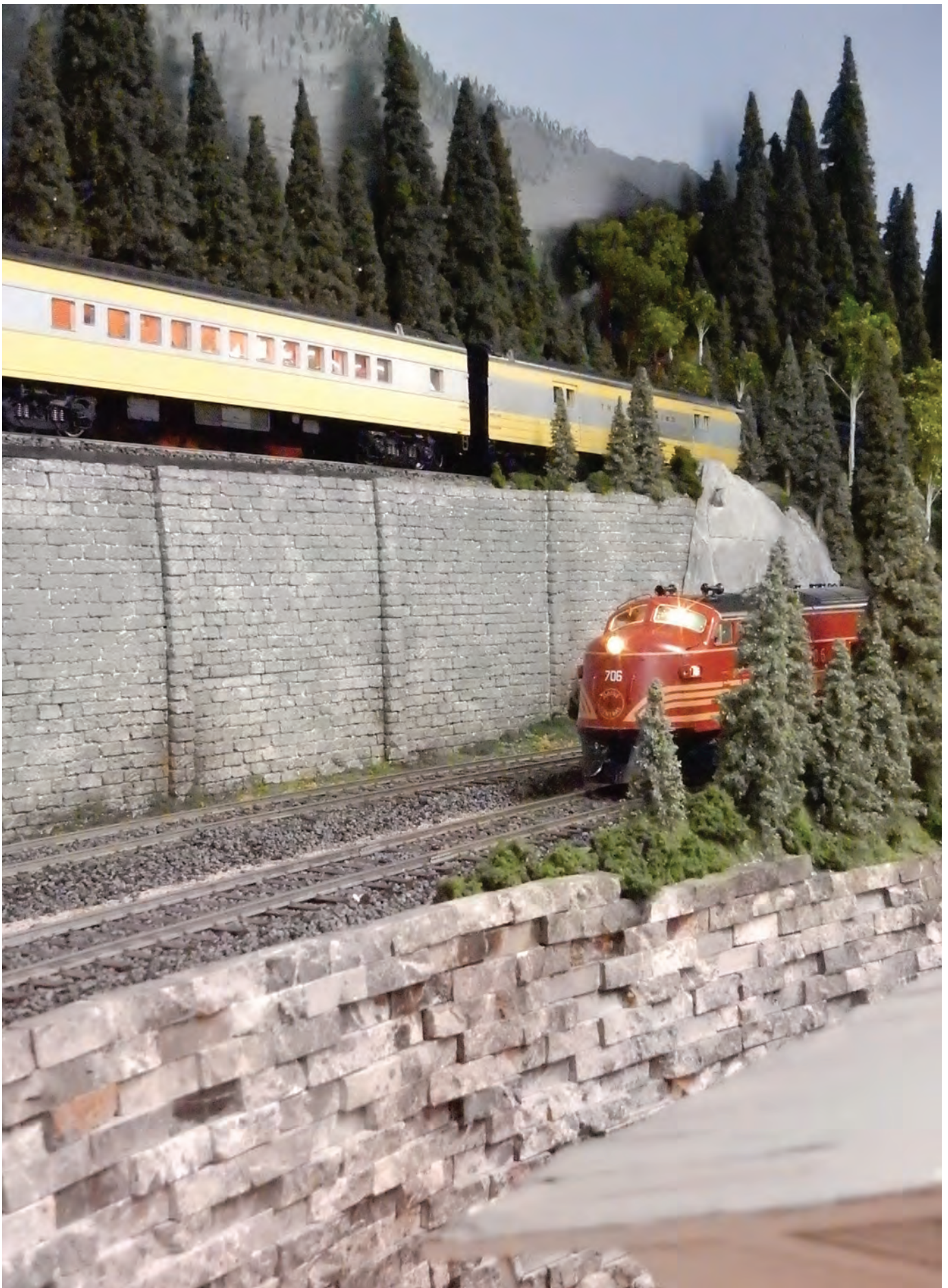






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