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**80 Years Young and
Still Going Strong:
The Kingston Model
Railroad Club**

**Bill Laughland's
Great Day at
Black Rock**

**Hide a Support
Column with a
Working
Clock Tower**

**George Brown Reviews
Lionel Legacy SD40
Williams by Bachmann Scale GG1**

AMBER WAVES OF GRAIN



MASTER TRINITY 5161 COVERED HOPPERS NOW ARRIVING FROM ATLAS O

In 1995, Trinity Industries introduced a new center-sill design covered hopper car designed primarily for grain transport. The new design was visually quite different - this one featured curved sides versus previously familiar rib-sided design adopted from Pullman-Standard. The new 5161 cubic-foot capacity design along with the recently introduced allowable 286,000 lbs GRL (Gross Rail Loading) brought a new standard to the industry (Trinity's competition were ACF® and Thrall).

Initial deliveries went to Trinity's leasing component and to ADM Transportation, a large private company heavily invested in grain products. Within months, deliveries to the other "grain" companies began rolling down the steel rails. Eventually, the traditional grain railroads jumped in on the game with BNSF leading the pack. The 5161 grain variants have long trough hatches usually broken into sections for easy opening. The outlets on grain cars are usually gravity-only and vary by manufacturer. Fixed shaker brackets can be found on the hopper sides.

However, not all the 5161s are for grain-products. BNSF has a good-sized fleet of cars used for sugar transport that feature round-hatches in elongated hatches, gravity-pneumatic gates and have special interior lining. Other variations include round-hatch only cars for chemical transport and cars being used for the potash and fertilizer industry.

Currently, the design is still in production with over 27,000 units being delivered and this model stands as being the most popular grain car in today's market.



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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.

ROSS MADE IN AMERICA

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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
031 WYE REMOTE	\$94.95
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#5 DOUBLE CROSSOVER.....	\$479.95
#8 DOUBLE CROSSOVER.....	\$679.95
#4 YARD CROSSOVER.....	\$209.95

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092	\$7.99
096	\$8.49
0100	\$8.99
0104	\$8.99
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0120	\$9.99
0128	\$10.99
10 INCH STRAIGHT	\$5.99
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GARGRAVES FLEX TRACK 37"....	\$8.95

ATLAS MADE IN CHINA

036 REMOTE.....	\$104.95
045 REMOTE.....	\$104.95
054 REMOTE.....	\$104.95
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	

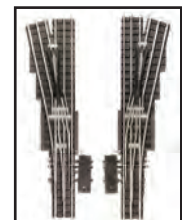
027.....	\$7.95
036.....	\$6.75
045.....	\$7.95
054.....	\$6.75
063.....	\$8.95
072.....	\$9.95 WOW!
081.....	\$11.95 WOW!
NOT MADE	
090.....	\$14.50 WOW!
099.....	\$15.95 WOW!
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
0108.....	\$18.95 WOW!
NOT MADE	
NOT MADE	
10 INCH STRAIGHT....	\$6.75
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40"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



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Publisher

Richard P. Melvin
publisher@ogaugerr.com

Editor-in-Chief

Allan Miller
editor@ogaugerr.com

Special Projects Editor

Ed Boyle
ed@ogaugerr.com

Associate Editors

Jim Barrett
jim@ogaugerr.com

George Brown
george@ogaugerr.com

Kathryn Brown
kitty@ogaugerr.com

Advertising Sales Manager

Alan Arnold
adman@ogaugerr.com

Advertising Production Manager

Don Pedicini, Jr.
don@ogaugerr.com

Design & Layout / Pre-Press

W-Graphics Digital Services, Inc.
ogauge@teamwgraphics.com

Subscription Manager

Linda Melvin
linda@ogaugerr.com

Merchandising Manager

Cari Fanta
cari@ogaugerr.com

Section Gang

Bill Bramlage
Don McCuaig
Dave Minarik
Skip Natoli
Jim Policastro
Joey Ricard

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ON THE COVER

Action reigns on the Kingston Model Railroad Club's 2-rail O scale Hudson Valley Lines. The club was featured back in April 1989 when this magazine was *O Scale Railroading*. At that time, the club, founded in 1937, was well over 50 years old. It is still going strong after nearly 80 years, as Section Gang member Jim Policastro learned during a recent visit.

Photo by Jim Policastro

Editor's Corner

Allan Miller



It's Show Time Again

By the time you read this, the prime season for toy trains and model railroading will be fast approaching. That's the period of special emphasis for and by our hobby that begins early in October and continues through Christmas to the end of the year and slightly beyond. It's a time when the tradition of toy trains is perhaps best and most successfully exposed to the general public via the media (especially classic films), club open houses and exhibits, store displays, and in a variety of other ways including

model train shows and meets. And it's that category of shows and meets that merit a bit of discussion here because these events are closely linked to my long-standing philosophy of growing the hobby one person at a time.

This seasonal emphasis on toy trains dates back more than a century when real railroads were everywhere. Trains and train travel were a part of the everyday experience for a great many Americans. Around that same time, an astute marketing genius

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named Joshua Lionel Cowen recognized that his Lionel toy trains could be promoted as a fitting action-packed addition for display and operation around the base of the family Christmas tree. Hence a tradition was born, and it's reasonable to assume that this tradition will continue to be shared from generation to generation in the future, just as it has been for more than 100 years.

Today there are special challenges to our hobby. Trains, both real and model, remain a source of fascination to young and old alike. But in contemporary American society, model trains face formidable competition for an individual's attention, time, and dollars. With real railroads being significantly less visible or available to the general population and with young and old alike faced with multiple sources vying for their precious leisure time, those of us actively involved in the hobby of model railroading have our work cut out for us. Add to that the aging demographics of a significant portion of our participants, your editor included, it's easy to see that those of us who truly enjoy and have benefitted from this hobby need to get busy growing its ranks. An easy and fun way to accomplish this is to invite a friend, relative, or colleague to accompany you to a local, regional, or national toy train show or meet. These events are particularly prevalent during the fall and winter, and you're likely to find one or more of them in your local area between now and the Christmas holiday.


Train shows are events where a number of operating layouts are on display, often representing a range of scales from Z (1:220 scale) through large scale (1:22.5 scale and others). These events are great for showing the uninitiated what can be accomplished in the hobby in spaces ranging from the inside of a briefcase (Z scale) through garden-type railroads (G gauge). Each scale or gauge has its own set of advantages and limitations of course, but those of us already in O gauge should have little problem being credible ambassadors for our favorite scale. Besides, with Christmas fast approaching, O gauge is a completely logical choice for that first around-the-tree introduction to model railroading.

Train meets are somewhat different with an emphasis on the buying and selling of toy and model trains. But these events can also provide a valuable educational experience for the novice. Few of us are blessed with unlimited financial resources to devote to a hobby interest of any type, and a train meet is as fine a place as any to see what our dollars will or will not buy. It's the kind of up-close-and-personal exposure that one simply cannot get and fully appreciate by exploring things on the Internet.

The entry fees for most any show or meet are modest, so treating someone close to you to this introductory experience on a weekend morning or afternoon will not cost an arm and a leg. And the person accompanying you may—just may—leave the event with a bit of creative inspiration sparked by something he or she saw there. Permit me to provide a real-life example:

My girlfriend, Wendy, had virtually no exposure to this hobby before she met me a year or so ago, aside from having raised two sons and two daughters who played with some Brio trains in their childhood years. But she was interested in what I do for a living and was willing to accompany me to the largest of all toy train meets this past April: the semiannual event hosted by the Eastern Division of the Train Collectors Association at York, Pennsylvania. While there, she had an opportunity to meet some of this hobby's finest ambassadors and to get some exposure to what the hobby is all about.

The photo shows Wendy enjoying a hands-on demonstration of scenery-building techniques conducted by Scenic Express, after which she assured me she would "kick my butt" when it comes to creating scenery for our future layout. She came away from the York meet impressed to the extent that we recently preordered her very first O gauge trains: a subway and a trolley from my—no, make that our—local train shop Mercer Junction. I'm not sure when these items will be available, but you can be quite certain that after they arrive, Wendy will be putting them into service on the new layout we will be building together.

So, I continue to follow my own one-person-at-a-time advice for keeping the hobby going and growing. It's your turn now! 



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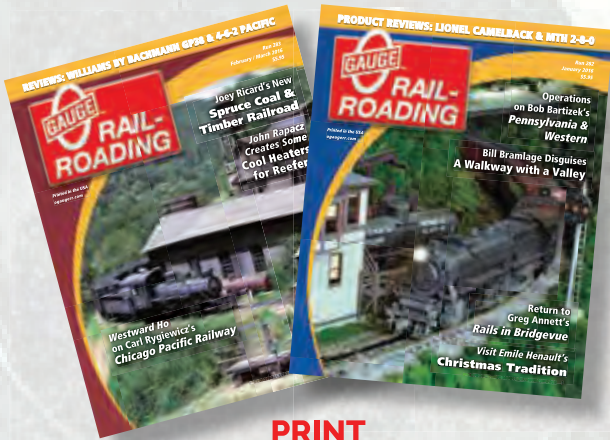


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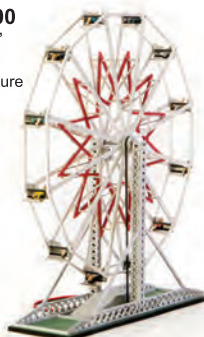


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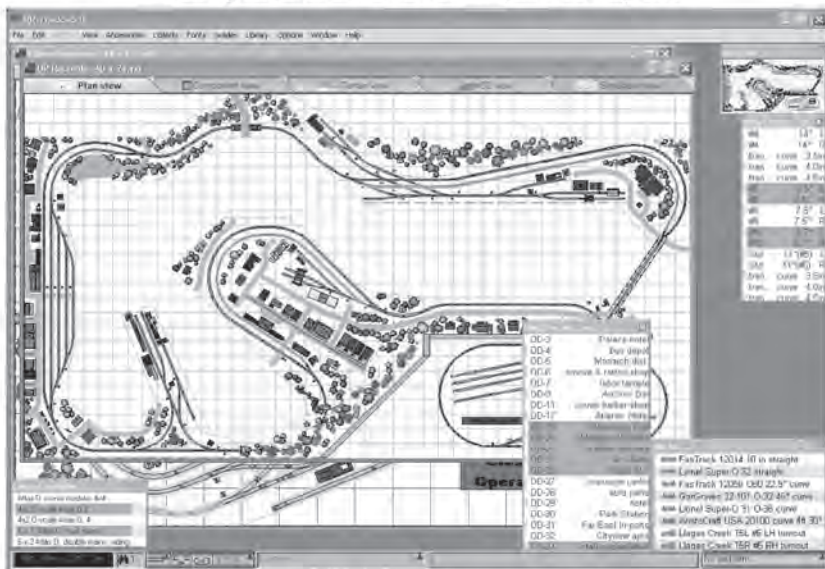


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Product Showcase



027 Layout: Just Add Glue

RRinaBOX has introduced the QuickieLine Kit for O27 track and trains. This kit contains pre-cut pieces of foam board to build the 5'4" x 3'4" layout shown to which the modeler adds track, trains, buildings, and scenery. Internal ribs and profiles create the benchwork. No power tools are required for assembly; just add glue. Made in the U.S.A., the kits come with an illustrated handbook and sell for \$349.00 plus shipping. Kits are also available in On30. Go to www.rrinbox.com for ordering and more information or write to RRinaBOX, 309 N. Front St., Philadelphia, PA 19106. Videos of assembly and finished layouts using the QuickieLine Kit are on YouTube.



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Remembering Grandpa

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A New Train in Town

Article by Michael Marsh

I have been collecting O and O27 gauge electric trains since I was about eight years old. My dad took his postwar Lionel train out of the closet and set it up one Christmas. That's all it took; I was forever hooked! Growing up in upstate New York, I saw the final years of the Erie-Lackawanna and the beginning of Conrail in our small town. Later in life, I was thrilled when I discovered the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad (CVSR) shortly after moving to Parma, Ohio, and was even more thrilled when I learned of the opportunity to become a volunteer with that line.

The CVSR runs between Independence and Akron in northeastern Ohio through the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The park encompasses 33,000 acres of land and is part of the national park system. The railroad runs along an old stretch of track about 26 miles long that follows part of the old Erie Canal system. The round-trip scenic ride from Independence through Akron (with stops at smaller stations along the way) takes approximately three hours. The purchase of an all-day pass allows passengers to hop off the train for a couple of hours, explore the park and the nearby attractions, and then reboard to return to the starting location.

The railroad is as rich with history as the park around it and it is highly regarded for the family friendly entertainment it provides. There are scenic runs, educational charters, beer and wine trains, and dinner train experiences. The Bike Aboard program in the summer carries hundreds of passengers and their bicycles through the park at a very reasonable cost. "Steam in the Valley" is always an exciting highlight as the famed Nickel Plate Road 765 steam engine roars through in the fall. Trips this year will be on September 17–18 and 24–25. The experience I have enjoyed as a volunteer is greatly fulfilling.

It was while participating on one of our runs that I was struck with the idea of having a replica of this distinctive train made for my layout. I wanted the vintage engines and rolling stock made in O gauge, of course, so I could bring the experience home to my layout. I began to ask around to see if it had ever been considered or done. The answer was yes, it had been mentioned from time to time but not discussed with any seriousness or follow-through.



A ride on the CVSR is an ideal way to enjoy the scenic wonders of nature in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. (Photo courtesy of Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad)



Here is the prototype of what will be modeled in O gauge by MTH. (Photo courtesy of Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad)

Not dissuaded by the lack of prior action related to hoped-for models of the CVSR equipment, I decided to see what I might be able to do. A relatively short time later, I had the opportunity to meet Mike Wolf of M.T.H. Electric Trains at an open house at Stockyard Express hobby shop in Oberlin, Ohio. After some discussions, planning, and a good bit of negotiating, Mike agreed to take up the project. It won't be long before the first item will be available as the railroad's 6771 Alco diesel engine, adorned in its stunning new paint scheme. This limited-run item will hopefully be followed by coaches in the correct livery at a future date, but for now it's a model of the 6771.

A release date for the MTH model has not yet been announced, but hobbyists and fans interested in obtaining this colorful example of Alco power can visit the railroad's website at www.CVSR.com for updates and ordering information.

And if you haven't already or even if you already have, come on out and ride with us. It is a rail enthusiast's dream. I hope to see you aboard soon. 🚂



Nickel Plate 765 arrives at the CVSR station in Brecksville, Ohio, during the big Berkshire's fall 2015 visit. (Photo courtesy of CVSR Trainmaster Larry Blanchard)

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How would you like to show your trains and layout to your fellow O gauge railroaders?

You can take your photos using a digital camera capable of at least 3.3 megapixels set to the best JPEG image. Please send only original, unedited JPEG files. Color prints of 4"x 6" or larger are also fine. Be sure to include brief notes about the trains in the photos and any other information you'd like to share, such as the size of your layout, unique scenery, make of track, power supply or control system, and so forth.

We are looking for quality photography with good lighting and clear images; however, on-camera flash photos are generally not acceptable. Send your photo, CD, or prints to Readers' Rails, 33 Sheridan Road, Poland, Ohio 44514-1680. Or you can e-mail your image and text files to editor@ogaugerr.com.



Seen along the BOO Line

Faithful contributor Scott Smith felt we should include a Halloween topic in our October issue. To ensure that the all-popular All Hollows' Eve wouldn't go unnoticed, he submitted this photo of a scene on the O gauge layout at the Virginia Museum of Transportation in Roanoke. The museum's 3-rail pike depicts major rail sites in the area. Multiple trains operate over 600' of track on four levels. One of the track levels is a special "kid level" that lets youngsters, without them having to climb on steps or platforms, see the trains operate. The layout is continuously upgraded and maintained by the Roanoke Valley O Gauge Club. Visit www.vmt.org to learn more about the museum and its many programs and exhibits.



Halloween along Mosquito Creek

Mosquito Creek Lumber Company's nighttime track inspection speeder, nicknamed the "Voodoo Train," rattles along under the eerie light of a full bayou moon. The crew keeps an eye out for chicken sacrifices on the tracks this Halloween while passing through "lightning bugs" and Louisiana swamp gas. The railroad's log-hauling activities along this narrow gauge line will begin again in the early hours of the morning, long before the sun comes up over the bayou to chase any lingering spirits away. The photo was taken by Joseph Kreiss on his On30 Mosquito Creek Lumber Co. and Blackwater Gulf & Southern Rwy set in the 1940s. The layout features an inland rail-served U.S. Navy base and the town of Blackwater plus passenger service and lots of railroad logging activities set in the steamy cypress swamps of southern Louisiana. The nighttime effects on this image were produced in Adobe Camera Raw and Photoshop. The fog effect was created by gently blowing smoke onto the layout during the camera's time exposure.



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L81188	NYC 2-8-2 Heavy Mikado #9506 (L)	SALE	939.95
L81191	Erie Heavy Mikado #3207 (L)	(BTO)	1099.95
L82180	Nickel Plate 2-8-0 #458 (L)	(BTO)	669.95
L82181	Western Maryland 2-8-0 #734 (L)	(BTO)	669.95
L82534	NYC Streamlined J3a #5429 (L)(BTO)	SALE	1199.95
L82536	NYC Streamlined J3a #5429 (PT Tender)	SALE	1199.95
L82537	NYC Streamlined J3a #5426 (J3 Tender)	(SALE)	1199.95
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L83197	American Freedom Train #4449 GS-4 (L)	(BTO)	1429.95
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L82137	N&W #542 (Blue) GP30 (L)	Very Ltd Qty (BTO)	469.95
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L82235	Pennsy Alco PA AA Set (L)	Ltd Qty (BTO)	839.95
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L82458	Amtrak® Cabbage Ph III F40PH N/Pwd.	(BTO)	334.95
L82761	Union Pacific #8130 SD90Mac	(BTO)	544.95
L82764	Union Pacific #8055 SD90Mac	(BTO)	544.95
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L81308	CP LionChief Plus 4-6-4 Pacific #2469	359.95
L82965	Santa Fe LionChief Plus Hudson	359.95
L82966	Lackawanna LionChief Plus Hudson	359.95
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L82415	Lackawanna LionChief Plus Camelback	369.95
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ROLLING STOCK (Continued)

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Product Reviews



Williams by Bachmann Pennsylvania Railroad GG1

Review and Photos by George Brown

It's long, it's graceful, it's fast! Oh, and the real Pennsylvania GG1s were too. What differentiates this latest Williams by Bachmann edition of the scale-sized GG1 from its predecessors is the digital polyphonic True Blast Plus sound generator. Yes, the popular GG1 for conventional transformer-controlled operation has been offered several times in the past by the former Williams Electric Trains. In fact, the current release from Williams by Bachmann is concrete proof of the colloquial axiom, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Well, it sure ain't broke!

One of my first actions after unpacking the new Tuscan five-stripe GG1 was to set it beside my Brunswick green single-stripe GG1 from 1999 and compare the two physically. Except for the expected color and trim differences, and also the dust on my '99-vintage model, the two GG1s were identical. After an initial run confirming the new Tuscan GG1 was the excellent runner I expected it to be, I coupled the two scale-proportioned leviathans together at the point of my 1:48 scale 10-car mail-express train to see if they would run together in a double-headed consist. They did with panache, and I was more than just pleased with their smooth operation and visual effect. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Before I get into the finer points of the Williams by Bachmann model, let's take a brief look at the real GG1s.

Prototype Notes

With its overall length of 6" shy of 80', the bidirectional GG1's symmetrical streamlined body styled by the famous industrial designer Raymond Lowey had the look of no other locomotive on North American rails. Built specifically for service on the Pennsylvania Railroad's electrified lines, the fleet of 139 GG1s hauled passenger trains between New York and Washington and also Philadelphia and Harrisburg.



With the 1933 completion of its 11,000-volt, 25-cycle AC electrified main line from New York City to Washington, the Pennsylvania Railroad soon realized a critical need for an electric locomotive that could rush 18-car heavyweight passenger trains by itself over the newly electrified line. The road's then-current passenger power, the 3,750-horsepower 2-C-2 (4-6-4) boxcab P5 was incapable of sustained high-speed operation with trains of over ten cars. Additionally, the P5s were revealing inherent defects such as cracked frames and axles.

A small army of engineers from several companies, including the railroad, Baldwin, General Electric, Westinghouse, and Gibbs & Hill, came together and developed two competing designs: the 5,000-horsepower 2-D-2 (4-8-4) R1 and the GG1 with its articulated 2-C-C-2 wheel arrangement (4-6-6-4). On the PRR, 4-6-0 ten-wheeler steam locomotives were class G, such as the G5. The GG1s were essentially two back-to-back class G ten-wheelers.

Powered by 12 motors, each developing 385 horsepower and geared together in pairs on the six drive axles, the 230-ton GG1s were capable of over 4600 continuous horsepower with a herculean 8500 horsepower on tap for short-term starting of their trains. The GG1 was ultimately chosen for production because it was slightly more stable at speed over the R1.

Except for the development prototype built in 1934 and the first 15 units erected in 1935 by General Electric, all of the GG1s rolled out of the railroad's Altoona shops between 1935 and 1942. Although the body on the first GG1, originally numbered 4899 and later renumbered to 4800, was riveted together over a welded truss frame, all successive GG1s had smooth, welded steel bodies covering their nearly indestructible frames.

With the railroad reducing its passenger service beginning in the 1950s, it assigned nearly 60 of its GG1s to freight duty, but these locomotives were all available for passenger service when needed.

The prototype for our evaluation model, Pennsylvania number 4909, was erected in 1941, wore Tuscan red with the road's signature five merging gold stripes, and frequently pulled the *Senator* and the *Congressional* at sustained speeds of up to 90 mph. The last GG1 was retired from service on NJ Transit in 1983, yet a number of the big electric locomotives are still on display across the country.



Construction and Features

As is the typical construction for most of today's 3-rail O gauge diesel and electric locomotives, a molded ABS plastic body shell rides on a stamped steel frame. Six easily accessed screws hold the body to the frame. Underneath the frame are the two articulated die-cast power and pilot truck assemblies with cast side frames. Each power truck has one electrical pickup roller.

All axles in both power trucks ride in what appears to be steel bushings that I've found to be prevalent in most previously released and current Williams and

Williams by Bachmann locomotives. As I've written in previous reviews, these bushings could likely outlast the rest of the engine's drive mechanism with proper lubrication. Of course, each driver wheelset consists of a pair of sintered metal drive wheels plus its drive gear pressed onto the driver axle. Yes, the sintered metal drive gear is separate from its corresponding wheel. Cast into the outside surface of the drive wheels are representations of the real GG1's unique spring-cup drive mechanism that cushioned thrusting torque from the motors.

One point I found interesting is each of the pilot wheels is separate and turns

Williams by Bachmann PRR GG1 Features and Details

- Molded ABS body shell on stamped steel frame
- Two 6-wheel power trucks with traction tires
- Two DC can motors, each with a flywheel
- Metal drive gears
- Die-cast trucks, truck side frames, and pilots
- Die-cast thumbtack-style operating couplers
- Electronic 6-amp reverse board with directional lockout
- True Blast Plus digital 16-bit polyphonic sound board
- Flush clear plastic windows and windshield
- Molded-in windshield wipers
- Dual incandescent headlights
- Illuminated class and marker lamps
- Operating pantographs
- Stamped steel ladders
- Wire handrails and window bars
- O42 minimum 3-rail curve



freely on its wire axle instead of the more commonplace pressed-together wheelset. As shown in the photos, train lines along with multiple-unit cables and connectors are cast into the pilots while brake cylinders and other details are cast into the truck side frames.

On top of the body are the removable steel pantographs that can be manually raised or lowered and locked in the down position. The only other separately applied details on the top of the body are the pantograph insulators, horn, and steam generator exhaust stack. All the cooling grilles and other small details are molded into the body shell.

The two headlamp bulbs are wired together on track voltage so both illuminate continuously regardless of which direction the GG1 is running. Each bulb illuminates its respective clear headlight lens and also the red classification and marker light lenses.

A single screw holds each motor to its respective power truck so disassembly for

periodic servicing of the metal worm and gear with grease is not a difficult task. The motor is also the pivot point for the articulated power and pilot truck assembly.

Both the satin finish paint and the decoration are flawless. Application of the hallmark five-stripe trim that eloquently proclaimed Pennsylvania Railroad is some of the best I've seen. The red and gold Pennsy keystone graphics are equally precise. Additional Pennsy paint schemes available in this release of the GG1 are the Brunswick green five stripe, silver single stripe, and Brunswick green single stripe.

At Trackside

The GG1, as with all Williams by Bachmann locomotives and also the earlier editions from Williams, powers up in forward. But because the GG1 is bidirectional and symmetrical, the question quickly arises of which is the power-up default forward end. To resolve any confusion, a small gold F is painted on each side of the model's lower edge at one end. This F denotes the power-up forward end. The only other telltale is the stack for the steam generator, which favors the default

forward end. However, if the body shell is removed, it can be installed facing either way, which can lead to the F being on the wrong end for startup in forward. When installing the body shell back on the frame, note that the speaker is on the default aft end of the frame, so the F on the body goes on the other end.

Because each pilot and power truck is an articulated assembly, the GG1 reliably tracked the editorial Carpet Central Railroad's O72 and O54 curves and O72 crossovers. Also with its 19" body length with each power truck pivot approximately 7" inboard from each end, the GG1 looks best on O72 or wider curves. However, this exceptionally long model even tracked a temporary loop of O45 Atlas 21st Century sectional track. With curves this tight, a large amount of overhang to the outside of the curve at both ends of the engine is to be expected. Williams by Bachmann specifies O42 as the minimum 3-rail curve for the GG1.


In addition to the sounds of the bell and single-chime horn are the pounding of air pumps overlaid by the high-pitched whine of forced-air blowers. On the real GG1s, these blowers forced cooling

air over the electrical step-down transformer and also the traction motors. I can't attest to the accuracy of the blower sounds because as a lad standing on the platform at Philadelphia's 30th Street Station, the GG1s were almost dead silent as they arrived and departed from the station stop.

In keeping with other Williams by Bachmann diesel and electric locomotives, the GG1 is geared tall; that is, for high-speed running. Because of this gearing and with no load or a light one on its coupler, the GG1 starts and moves out aggressively on pure sine wave power from my postwar ZW. At the point of our standard test train of eight scale passenger cars as well as my mail-express train I mentioned earlier, the GG1 was not only a handsome locomotive but also a competent one. With the heavy load of either train, starts and stops were reasonably realistic, and the engine exhibited no problems handling the load up to a scale 70 mph, which was as fast as I chose to run the train. And yes, a bunch of additional throttle was still available at that speed.

At the End of the Run

If there was a product line and a locomotive that could be classified as bulletproof, the Williams by Bachmann

line of locomotive and its GG1 would be likely candidates. Our evaluation sample is simple and rugged in addition to proving itself as a handsome and smooth runner. Searches on the Internet showed prices at discount mail-order train dealers in the \$430 range. 

#41851 Pennsylvania #4909 GG1

Suggested retail price: \$699.95 on the Bachmann website and at Bachmann dealers

**Bachmann Industries;
www.bachmanntrains.com**

Williams by Bachmann GG1 Conventional Performance

Length: 20" over closed couplers

19" between end sills

Distance Between Locomotive Pickup Rollers: 8-3/4"

Weight on Driving Wheels: 5 lbs, 7 oz

Power Consumption at Idle: 0.4 A @ 6.7 VAC, 2.7 W

Tractive Effort: 2 lbs, 15 oz @ 11.4 VAC, 5.6 A, 63.8 W

Minimum Sustained Speed: 14 scale mph @ 7.1 VAC, 1.4 A, 9.9 W

Maximum Tested Speed: 70 scale mph @ 12.1 VAC, 1.8 A, 21.8 W

Track and Switches: Atlas 21st Century 072, 054, 045

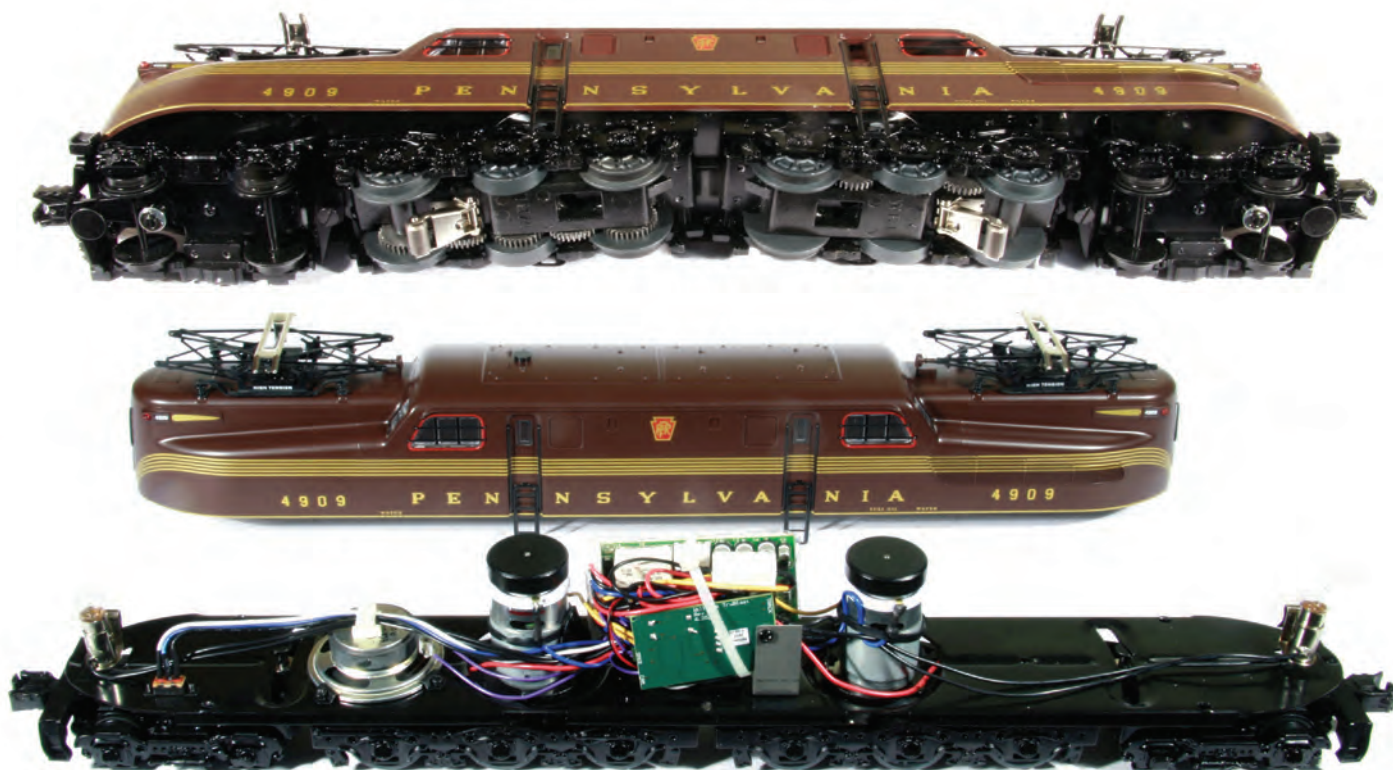
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Control System: Transformer-controlled conventional operation

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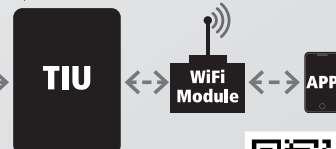
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Lionel Legacy SD40

Review and Photos by George Brown

At one time, the name Lionel was synonymous with short locomotives and stubby rolling stock proportioned for reliable operation on O27 or O31 tinplate curves. To negotiate these extremely tight curves, pilots and couplers on diesel locomotives were assembled to the trucks. Although many of today's O gauge models of diesels are scale-proportioned and highly detailed, they still have the traditional tinplate style of pilots and couplers integrated with the trucks. This traditional design works great and looks reasonably realistic on the rails; that is, until the locomotive runs through curves with its pilots and couplers swinging off to the side following the track.



With the latest O scale road diesels from Lionel, the look of the traditional tinplate pilot is gone. In its place is a pilot that looks to be a realistically rigid part of the locomotive's frame, but it swings laterally in curves when coupled to a piece of rolling stock or even another locomotive. The colorful Chessie System SD40 is among the latest in 3-rail O scale diesels from Lionel.

Prototype Notes

By the early 1960s, the diesel locomotive horsepower race was in full gallop with GE and Alco fielding higher powered locomotives than those from EMD. The EMD model 567 prime mover initially developed in the late 1930s was at its limit for horsepower and reliability. Thus the company's new 645 prime mover became available in 1965 in the turbocharged 20-cylinder SD45, which was rated at 3600 hp. Early 1966 saw the debut of the 3000-hp SD40 with the turbocharged 16-cylinder prime mover powering the six-axle unit. When compared visually to the SD45, the SD40 had a considerably shorter body encasing its shorter prime mover, which gave the SD40 and EMD's later and best-selling SD40-2 their distinctively long porches at each end.

However, the original SD40 was physically shorter than its dash-2 successor. Its almost 66' overall length was 3' shorter, with the rear hood at 18" shorter. The only other visual differentiation between the original SD40 and its dash-2 variant was the trucks. Under the SD40 were EMD's Flexicoil trucks with their evenly spaced axles and no sway damper. EMD's later high-traction HT-C trucks with their unevenly spaced axles plus a sway damper on each center axle's journal carried most of the SD40-2s. Nearly



Lionel Legacy SD40 Features and Details

- Legacy control system
- Odyssey II speed control
- Legacy RailSounds
- Dual can motors with flywheels
- Fan-driven smoke unit with adjustable output
- Die-cast trucks, pilots, and fuel tank
- Metal drive gears
- Separate brake cylinders and air lines
- Four traction tires (spares also included)
- Separate fans visible inside their housings
- Wire lifting rings
- Directional LED headlights and marker lights
- Illuminated number boards and cab interior
- Separate windshield wipers
- Clear plastic cab windows
- Painted crew figures
- Separate hand brake wheel, sand fill caps, and horns
- Wire grab irons and handrails
- Safety chains and metal handrail stanchions
- Nonslip tread pattern on walkways
- Separate train and MU lines
- Wire coupler cut levers
- Command-controlled die-cast ElectroCouplers
- IR transmitter

1,200 SD40s erected between 1966 and 1972 moved trains over a number of Class 1 North American railroads.

The prototype for the Lionel model of the Chessie System #7500 was one of four SD40s (7497–7500) built for the B&O in 1969. According to data on the Internet, 13 SD40s were previously delivered to the railroad in 1967.

Construction and Features

Several points make the new SD40 stand out as a nice 3-rail scale model. Lionel has not previously modeled the original SD40; the company's prior offerings were models of the immensely popular SD40-2. Also, certain external details that varied between railroads are modeled depending on road name.

The pilots have a self-centering arrangement consisting of an internal spring and Y-raceway cam. On the display shelf or on the rails with no cars coupled to the SD40, its pilots look realistic at all times. When tracking a curve, the appropriate pilot swings laterally as governed by the car coupled to it. As I wrote in my review of the Lionel ES44AC in Run 285, to me this unique design is the best of both worlds for 3-rail O gauge trains—realism and operating flexibility.

Real SD40s were built with a number of options that varied according to orders from the purchasing railroad. For example, B&O #7500, the prototype for the Chessie SD40, was delivered with footboards, no hand brake wheel on the short hood, straight grab irons, Flexicoil trucks

with two high-mounted brake cylinders, beaded “mail box” style of battery box, three-chime horns on the cab roof, bell high on the left hood, standard dynamic brakes, 4,000-gallon fuel tank, electrical cabinet air filter box, open fans, and diamond mesh screens behind the radiator grilles. All of these details are visible in these photos.

For a comparative listing of the SD40 details by the road names offered in the initial release of the Lionel SD40, see pages 12 and 13 in the 2015 Signature Edition catalog, which is available on the Lionel website.

Except for the pilots, construction of the SD40 follows the standard architecture for contemporary 3-rail diesel locomotives. A molded plastic body shell sits on a stamped steel frame with die-cast trucks and a fuel tank underneath.

On the six-wheel trucks, all wheels have flanges. Two of the adjacent wheelsets on each truck are powered, and the third, the wheelset next to the pilot, is an idler. The wheelset next to the fuel tank has traction tires that are a de facto standard on contemporary 3-rail locomotives. Off the rails, both trucks can swing in an unusually wide arc of approximately 45 degrees to the left and right. This wide swing allows easy access to the #0 Phillips head screws underneath the frame for maintenance or repair. On our evaluation sample, swinging either truck from 45 degrees back to center took a little manual finesse to guide it past the coupler coil and its wires.

Inside the body shell are the latest in surface-mount electronics and software for the Legacy control and Legacy RailSounds audio systems. Also residing under the long hood is the smoke unit that is capable of producing a lot of the white vapor that’s popular with a number of O gauge railroaders.

One nice feature on the frame is the rubber grommet protecting each group of electrical wires routing through a hole in the sheet steel to the trucks and couplers.

As with any model, its small particulars are what make it something special. As an example, the edge of each step was expertly trimmed in the pale peach accent color for the Chessie System livery. As to the rest of the paint, trim, and graphics, they are all equally and expertly applied. With today’s paint and decoration processes, I’m continually pleased with the precise application, especially on a three-color scheme like the Chessie.



Other road names in this initial release of the SD40 are Burlington Northern, Clinchfield, Conrail (normal and savings bonds trim), Grand Trunk, Missouri Pacific, and Southern Pacific (Kodachrome and red nose liveries). All liveries except the SP Kodachrome and Conrail savings bonds are available in two road numbers, which can be a boon to the O gauge railroader who likes to run double-headed power in matching colors. If I were buying an SD40, I’d have to have its matching running mate, which sure could get expensive.

At Trackside

As a locomotive sound aficionado, I found the start-up sounds during the initial power-up of the SD40 to be as exciting as they were unexpected. About the only special effect that was missing from what felt like a trackside-witness start-up of a real EMD 645 prime mover was that delightful aroma of hot steel and diesel exhaust. Calling the start-up and idle sounds fabulously realistic could be the understatement of the week.

The rest of the model SD40’s repertoire and mixing of locomotive sound recordings was equally enjoyable and accurate from the prime mover’s eight run levels to what Lionel calls the quilling horn. And for the hobbyist who enjoys human voice dialogs with supporting sound effects emanating from a locomotive, such as the filling of the fuel tank, the

SD40’s sound system delivers Lionel’s proprietary CrewTalk dialogs and TowerCom announcements on command from a CAB-2 or CAB-1L.

On the editorial Carpet Central Railroad with its wide curves and turnouts, the SD40 performed faultlessly. In command operation, starting the engine into motion was smooth and realistic as was slowing it to a stop and any speed in between. Running the SD40 using the transformer throttle was also pleasurable.

As a side note, the unique Legacy control and sound features are simply not available in conventional operation of any Legacy-equipped locomotive. Basic Legacy operating features are available with a CAB-1L/Base-1L system, but to realize all of the locomotive’s operating capabilities, the CAB-2 and Legacy Command Base are required.

The owners manual states the minimum curve is O54 with just about any car coupled to the locomotive. However, the manual also states, “Your locomotive will negotiate an O36 curve independently and with most scale freight cars.” I tried the SD40 on temporarily laid O42 and O36 curves with several different styles and makes of freight cars. Weighted cars with articulated couplers work the best with the SD40 on curves tighter than O54.

Obviously pilots that are traditionally assembled to the trucks move with those trucks vertically as well as laterally. On the SD40, the frame-mounted pilots have no

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vertical movement. Of course, the leading pilot with its realistic appearance of being part of the frame does not move laterally when the locomotive is tracking curves or turnouts. As a result, the locomotive's entire leading end and also the trailing end, if no cars are coupled to it, overhang the outside of curves by the same amount as the frame. In fact and as with any diesel the size of the SD40, the overhang at both ends and also in the middle is visually mild on wide curves such as O72 but gets excessive on curves tighter than O54.

Additionally, on both pilots of our evaluation SD40, its footboards are a realistic 3/32" above the rails on a flat section of track. While I'm on the topic of the model's realistic underpinnings, the bottom of the scale-sized fuel tank rides 5/32" above the rails, again on straight track. After all, the SD40 is a 3-rail scale diesel locomotive.

At the End of the Run

As a hobbyist who really likes scale fidelity in 3-rail O gauge trains, I applaud the mechanical, electronic, and sound engineering that went into the Lionel SD40. As to any price discounting, my search on the Internet found quotes in the \$550 range. 

6-82274 Chessie System SD40

Retail price: \$649.99 at authorized Lionel dealers

Lionel LLC; www.lionel.com

Lionel SD40 Legacy Performance

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

Length: 17-1/8" over closed couplers

15-5/8" between foot boards

Distance Between Locomotive Pickup Rollers:

1st and 2nd: 3-1/4"

1st and 3rd: 9-1/8"

1st and 4th: 12-3/8"

Weight on Driving Wheels: 5 lbs, 2 oz

Power Consumption at Idle @ 18 VAC: 0.12 A, 2.2 W

Tractive Effort @ 18 VAC: 3 lbs, 3 oz @ 2.8 A, 50.4 W

Minimum Sustained Speed @ 18 VAC: 1 scale mph @ 0.4 A, 7.2 W

Maximum Tested Speed @ 18 VAC: 60 scale mph @ 1.3 A, 23.4 W

Track and Switches: Atlas 21st Century 054 and 072

Power Transformer: Lionel ZW-L

Control Systems: Lionel Legacy Base, CAB-2; TMCC Base-1L, CAB-1L

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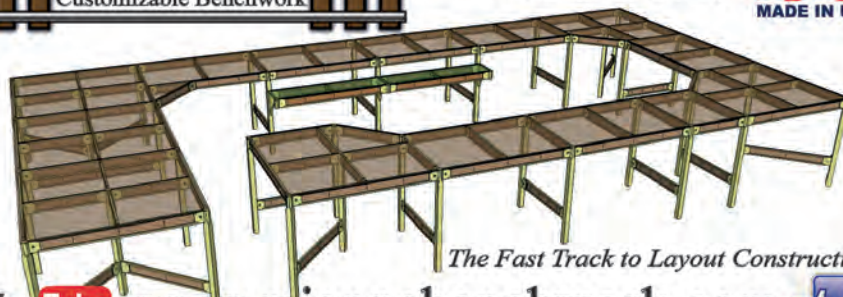


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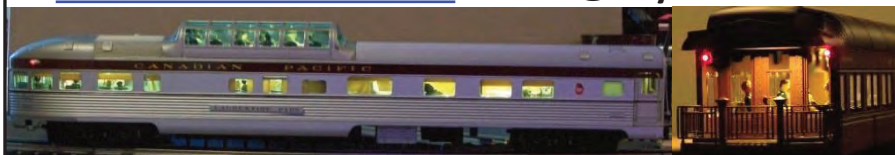
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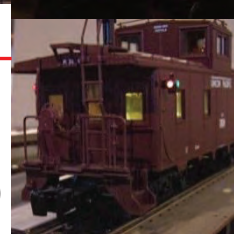
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The Kingston Model Railroad Club's Hudson Valley Lines



Here is a good view of the layout's upper level north of Kingstown Station. The magnificent backdrops around the layout were painted by a member who is a professional artist. The bridges on the layout were built by members from a variety of exotic woods, such as teak.

Going Strong after Nearly 80 Years

Article and Photos by Jim Policastro

The last time OGR featured the Kingston Model Railroad Club, it was April 1989, more than 27 years ago. If that doesn't seem like a long time ago, you should realize that at the time, the magazine's title was *O Scale Railroading*, the publisher was Myron Biggar, many of the photos were in black and white, and that particular article described watching Conrail freight trains pass by the clubhouse.

At that time, the club was already well over 50 years old, having been founded in the fall of 1937. The group also had the distinction and good fortune of being located in the same building for all of those years.

Well, in 2016 when you are reading this article in *O Gauge Railroading* magazine and perhaps in a digital format on your iPad, it is published by Rich Melvin, the magazine is in full color, Conrail blue

is history, and the latest CSX motive power hauls 89' auto carriers and intermodal units past the clubhouse. Although the organization's longevity back in 1989 was marveled at, consider that today the club is approaching its 80th anniversary, and it is still located in that very same building where the earliest members would have been taking a break outside watching New York Central steam power parade by.



This harbor scene is below the town of Lost River.



The transfer table serves the diesel facilities at MacGuinnes Junction.



The railroad's oldest active engine, #1314, rides the North Yard turntable.

A Sense of History

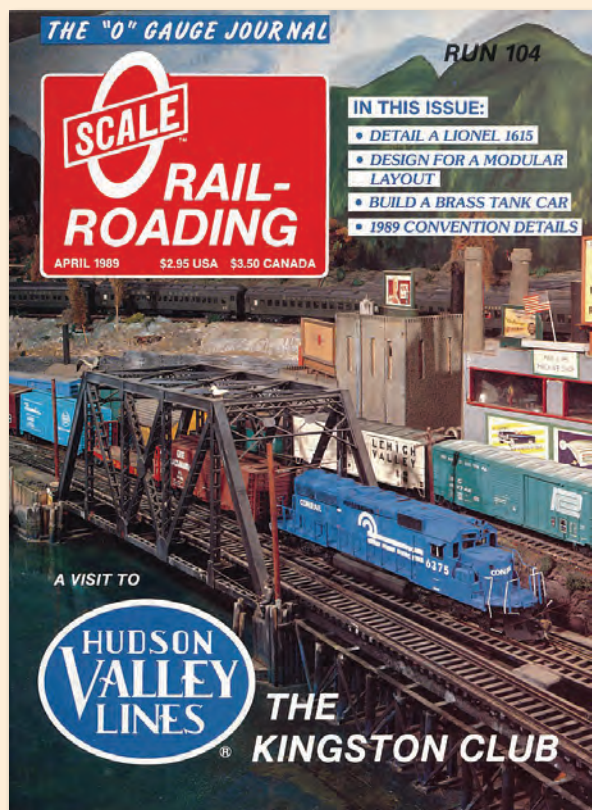
Everything about the Kingston Model Railroad Club shows just how proud these model railroaders are of their past, the respect they have for members past and present who contributed so much over the years, and of course their pride in the Hudson Valley Lines layout that has been the main focus of the club since its inception.

Originally an outside-third-rail O scale layout, the Hudson Valley Lines has been expanded with each addition to the clubhouse, which was once a railroad structure built by the Buffalo and West Shore Railroad, a road later absorbed by the New York Central. Today, a more conventional 2-rail O scale layout fills the building, now measuring 34' by 100'.

The layout was converted to 2-rail O scale many years ago, but just about every major scene, structure,



What would a trip through New York's Catskill Mountains be without a stop at Rip Van Winkle Park? "Old Rip" is immortalized in bronze at the park entrance.



The Hudson Valley Lines was the cover feature of this magazine's April 1989 issue (Run 104, titled *O Scale Railroading* back then). The accompanying article commemorated the Kingston Club's 50th Anniversary, which had been celebrated in 1987. The late Fred Dole, who was the magazine's design editor at the time



the article was written, noted that the club's layout "faithfully captures the flavor of the Hudson Valley for which it is named, and visitors to the layout can easily forget they are looking at O scale models instead of real trains." Fred's words ring as true today as they did back then.

backdrop, or landform can be associated with the efforts of a former member or a present member with years of seniority. As I asked about each area of the layout, everyone was quick to identify and describe the individual responsible for that feature. I could sense the pride all of them had for their past and for the members who had guided the club to where it is today.

Much of the equipment in operation on the layout is also a who's who of early scale manufacturers. Long-extinct names such as Adams, Lobaugh, Scalecraft, Max Gray, US Hobbies, Hines, All Nation, and IMP imports are represented on the layout. Rolling stock built from kits by Athearn, Walthers, Westbrook, Ambroid, and Silver Streak, among others were spotted in the course of the photography session.

Some Notable Contributions

At the risk of omitting some important contributors, the club members present at the photo shoot asked that special recognition be made of three individuals:

- Bob Haines has 48 years of continuous membership in the club and is responsible for much of the scenery construction and for many of the structures.
- Dick Edling has 47 years of seniority and is responsible for much of the electrical system.
- George Peck passed away just a short time before this article's publication. He had 39 years of membership, was a longtime club president, and kept the motive power and rolling stock in top condition.



A venerable old steeple cab electric works near the Olde Frothingslosh Pale Stale Ale Brewery. This old electric also made a cameo appearance in a photo in the original 1989 *O Scale Railroading* article.



Interurban car #104 passes a coal hopper being unloaded in a distinctly innovative way.



This view of South Yard is where the interurban line heads underground to a return loop.



A pleasure craft navigates the harbor waters below the town of Lost River. Note the effective modeling of the boat's wakes.


Respecting Roots, But Not Living in the Past

Despite all this talk of history, an organization that respects its past can still be active, innovative, and bring state-of-the-art materials and skills to its railroad. Just about all the structures on the layout are scratchbuilt or kitbashed and are constantly being upgraded.

Comparing photos in the 1989 article to the present will attest to that upgrading. The original article in Run 104 is available on the *O Gauge Railroading Digital Archive Release 2* available at the web store on www.ogaugerr.com or by calling 800-980-6477. There is much emphasis on small scenes that tell a story, and these are constantly being updated. Original ground cover has been replaced with modern products from Woodland Scenics and other sources. Trackage and turnouts are custom hand-laid or products of Atlas, Old Pullman, or Peco, with nickel silver having replaced the original brass.

Those vintage rolling stock kits share the rails with the latest scale cars that Atlas, MTH, and Lionel have produced—all converted to 2-rail, of course. Atlas, MTH, and Weaver engines sometimes take over for the old-timers. The Keller On-Board command system is in use on the mountain division, and while most of the layout is conventional DC-powered, I sensed that a DCC system might be in the future at some point.

Looking Ahead

Hearing members talk about ideas they have for improvements to their railroad and discussing upcoming open house events, I cannot help but feel that the future looks bright for the Kingston Model Railroad Club. The Hudson Valley Lines should be rolling on for many years in the future, and everyone involved hopes that it will be in that same not-so-little clubhouse on Susan Street, just across the way from the twelve-inch-to-the-foot prototype main line. The nearby prototype may change its corporate identity from time to time, but the Hudson Valley Lines seems destined to keep that same “Within the Oval” New York Central style of logo. Oh, and yes, of course they are welcoming and accepting new members. 



Midwest Quarry & Mining provides a narrow gauge presence in “downtown” Mink Hollow Junction.



Two fallen flag E-units glide past the Hudson Valley Lines Kingstown Station, which sees both steam and diesel action in the course of daily operations.



Marnett City Traction serves its namesake metro area with trolley service and a number of the surrounding rural areas with interurban cars.



This beach scene is located in Lost River, one of the towns served by the Marnett City Traction interurban line.



This interesting two-level station is at MacGuinnes Junction. Passing the station is a visiting Canandaigua Southern passenger car from the late track-planning guru John Armstrong's famous O scale layout.



Old No. 7 is seen pulling a work train past Mink Hollow Station in the Mountain Division of the Hudson Valley Lines.



This view shows just a part of the magnificent trestles located high in the Mountain Division. The trestles were built using redwood lumber.



Another scene shows the harbor below the town of Lost River.



A well-engineered switch control panel with realistic armstrong levers was built in the early days of the club and is still in use.



This mining operation is located near Summitville.



It's night at the North Yard engine facilities.



Another view displays the magnificent redwood lumber trestles.



This overview shows the interurban stop at Lost River.



The train at left has departed Mink Hollow and is approaching Summitville.



The club members who assisted with the photo shoot are from left to right: Tom Scrivani, George Peck, Jack Bartman, Joe Mitchell, and Bob Haines.

Annual Open House

Visit the Hudson Valley Lines during its annual Open House. The layout is open to the public on Saturday and Sunday each weekend in the month of November and is located at the end of Susan Street in Kingston, New York.

Club officers:

President - Jack Bartman
 Vice President - Joe Mitchell
 Treasurer - Vincent DeCicco
 Secretary - Kurt VanDeMark
 Director - George Peck (deceased)



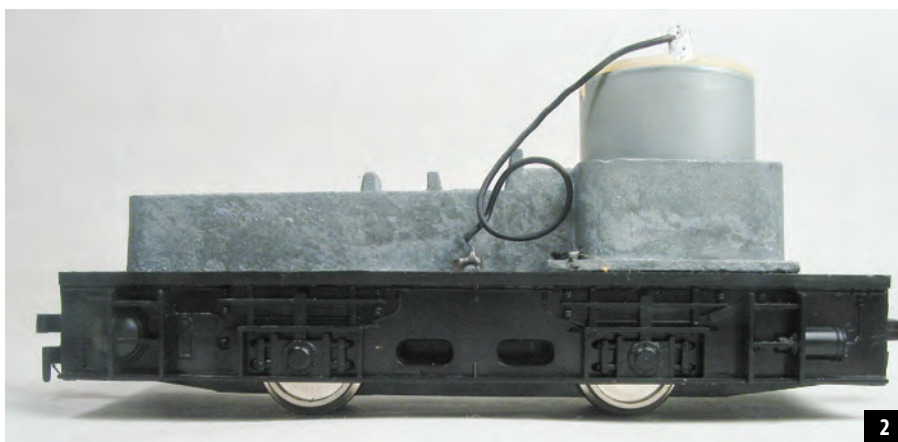
Create a Critter

Article and Photos by Allen K. Littlefield



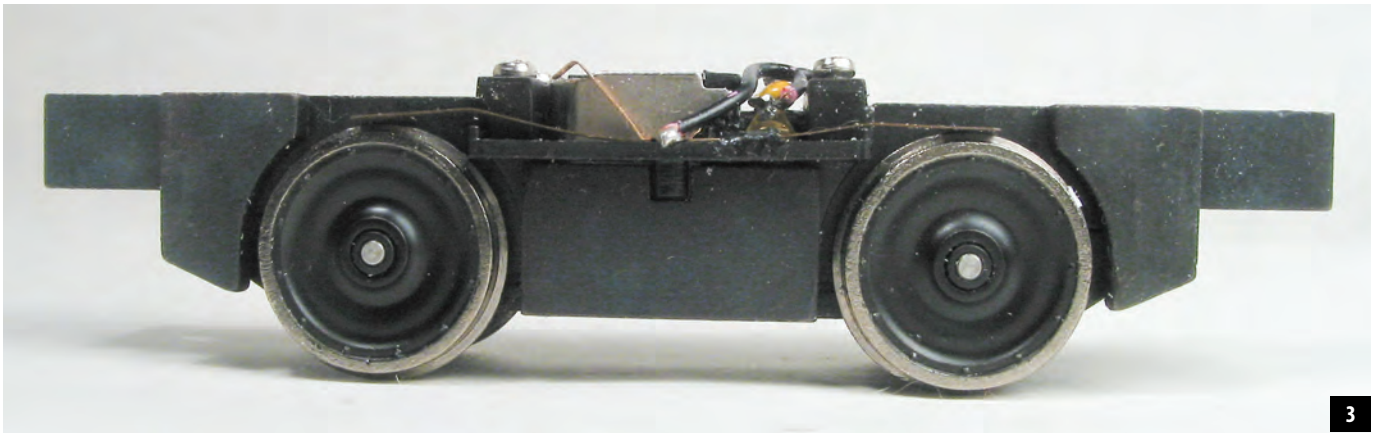
On30 narrow gauge model railroading has proven to be a viable participant in the world of 1:48 scale modeling. Representing a prototype track measure of 30" between the rails and able to use widely available HO track, On30 has been popularized in recent years by Bachmann Trains.

Today entire layouts are devoted to On30 modeling, and some hobbyists even enjoy combining both 1:48 standard gauge (O scale) and On30 trains on the same layout with the On30 lines—basically O scale equipment operating on HO gauge track—used to model smaller plantation, mining, lumbering, and quarry railroads. This type of modeling has sparked the creative side of the hobby to find suitable motive power and rolling stock to fill the bill. Sometimes the creative On30 Joe Hobbyist even seeks out appropriate HO mechanisms that can

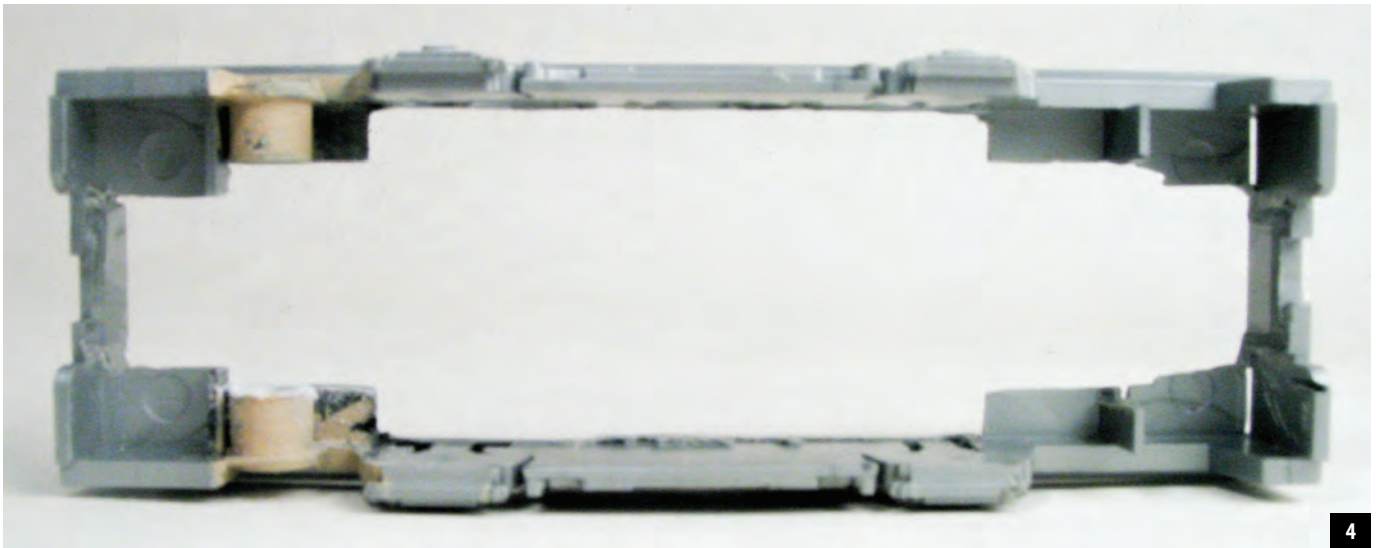


be kitbashed into credible small, backwoods-type On30 motive power. After all, the HO engine's power mechanism, axles, and wheels are all ready to go, so all that's really needed is a new frame, body, cab, and couplers. The modeler creates his own prototype as built by a 1:48 scale

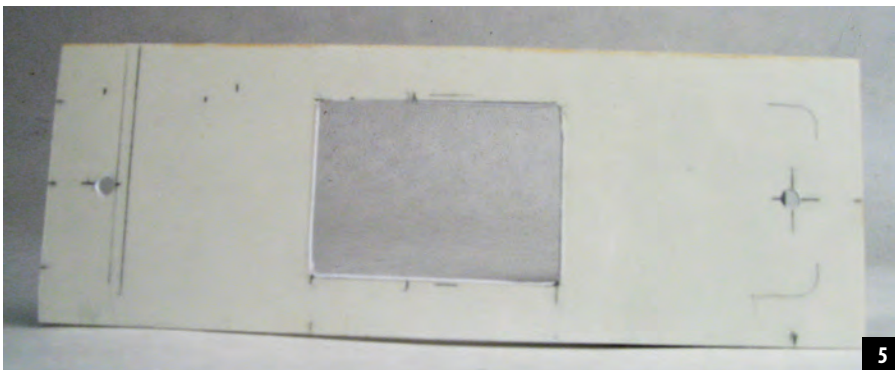
"shop gang" on the pike. Of course, a fair amount of prototype practice must be followed to create a viable model. Considerable study of the smaller types of motive power used by various real-world narrow gauge railroads can help to plan out what is possible.



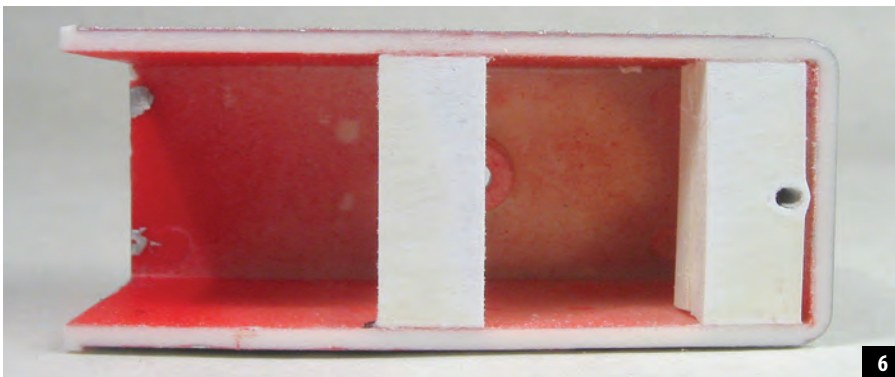
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I came up with a well-weathered, down-at-the-heel, critter-type loco that would fit well in a quarry or mine operation or just about anywhere an industrious short line enterprise might be envisioned.

Photo 1 shows the HO locomotive model that was cannibalized to create my On30 model. It is a rather large loco in HO scale, so it readily lends itself to the task at hand.

Photo 2 shows the drive mechanism that will be removed. Note that this is from a similar model with a different journal arrangement but shares the same wheelbase.

Photo 3 is of a Bachmann On30 streetcar mechanism that can be purchased from Bachmann at a reasonable price. Coincidentally, the wheelbase is the same as the HO locomotive model I used and lines up with the center of the journals when inserted into the new deck. This was first discovered and pointed out by Alan Carroll, an On30 modeler and master kitbasher from Massachusetts.



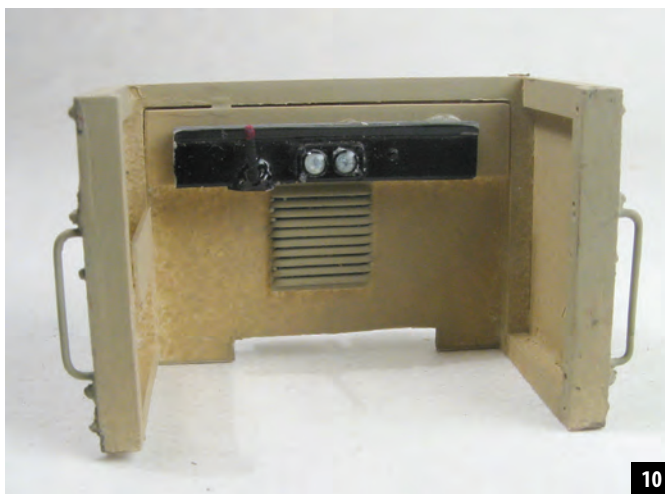
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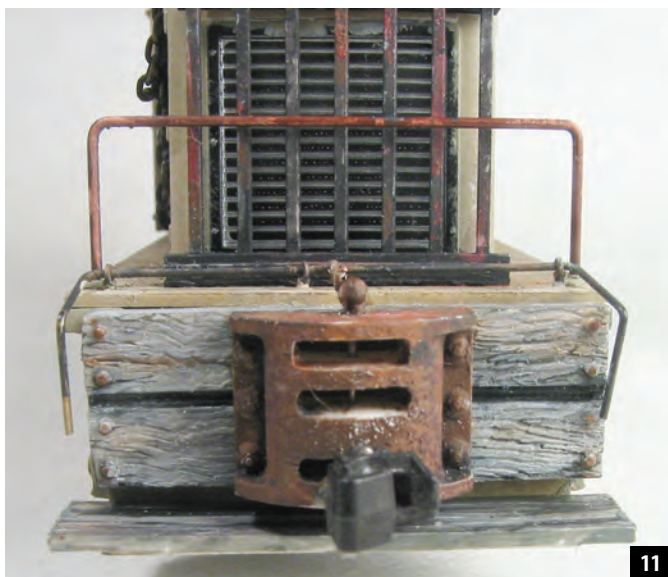
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He is affectionately known in the On30 community as the Baron of Slash and Bash, but I digress.

Photo 4 shows the original frame with the journals altered by removing deck material to accommodate the Bachmann mechanism.

Photo 5 shows the new styrene deck with mounting screw holes and a motor opening.

Photo 6 reveals the underside of the original HO model hood that has a thick styrene bar added to the front that will accept a small wood screw used to secure the mechanism through the deck to the main body. A similar bar will be in the rear of the cab in the form of a wide toolbox.

Photo 7 is a cab construction photo using styrene and brass wire for uprights to hold the roof. This is a plantation (open) style of cab.

Photo 8 shows the cab and hood mated to the deck. Some other details are also visible at this point.

Photo 9 highlights the cab controls and driver.

Photo 10 is an interior dashboard view.

Photo 11 shows the Kadee couplers that have replaced the original HO version.



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Photos 12 through 15 illustrate the completed model from several perspectives.

On30 has proven, for me at least, to be a creative and fun way to build locos and rolling stock for my Bridge Creek & Western Railroad. It's easy to imagine that my little shop guys on the layout build the "prototypes" for my model railroad. This approach allows my creative juices to flow and has significantly enhanced the fun factor in my model railroading activities. 

Hide a basement pillar with an illuminated working clock tower.

It's ABOUT TIME

Article, Photos, and Diagrams by John Sethian

Like many of us, I was faced with what I regarded as an outrageously obtrusive Lally column right in the middle of my layout. I briefly pondered how to lop it off without toppling the house, but wisely decided a more prudent course would be to hide

it. A tower of some sort is an obvious choice. But a tower should have a clock, and since it could be viewed from three sides, this one should probably have three clocks. The clocks should actually work and should also light up. I realize a painted view block would



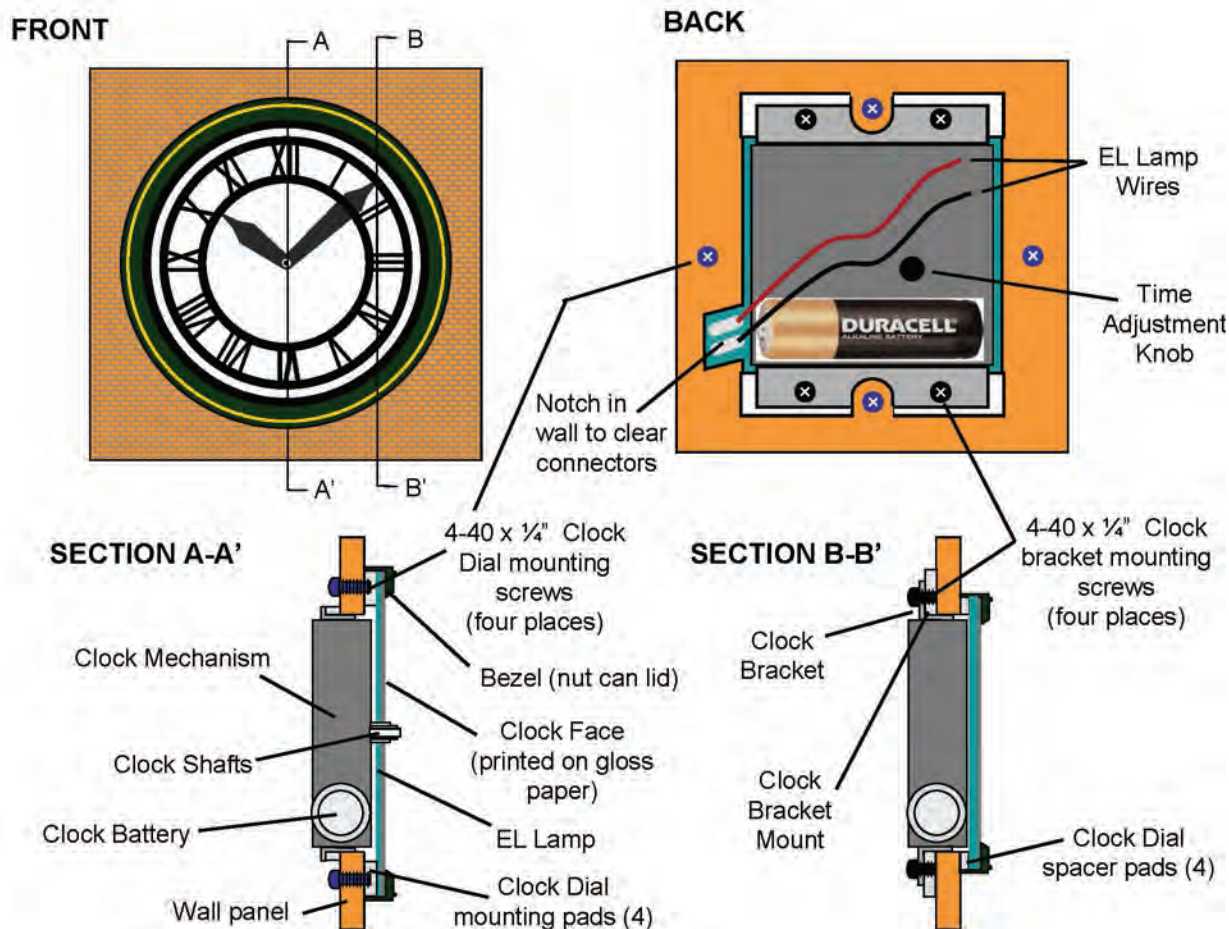


Diagram 1

hide the column just as well, and with much less work, but it would have been far less interesting (Photo 1).

For this project, I used inexpensive battery-powered clocks. They are mounted with ABS angles screwed into pads that have been glued to the backside of the building wall.

Illumination is provided by Miller Engineering electroluminescent (EL) lamps. The clock faces are computer-drawn, printed on glossy photo paper, and then glued on the EL lamps. The clock bezels are cut from the plastic top of a nut can. I prefer Blue Diamond brand Bold Almonds with Salt and Vinegar, although Wasabe and Soy Sauce is also tasty. The clock dial (bezel, EL lamp, and clock face) is made as one unit and held by screws inserted through the back of the wall. The clock hands are printed on photo paper and glued on top of the existing hands.

EL Lamp Primer

In an EL lamp, a phosphor layer is sandwiched between two flat conducting sheet electrodes. One electrode is opaque and the other is transparent. Applying high voltage causes electrons to flow between the electrodes and thus pass through the phosphor. Light is produced when electrons pass through the phosphor. The voltage needed is high, but the current is rather low, so the power can be provided by an electronic converter driven either by three AAA batteries or a wall module.

The lamps I used came from Miller Engineering. Its Jumbo EL Lamp Experimenters kit includes one lamp and the electronic converter. Also needed is one Jumbo 4"x 6" EL lamp for each additional clock. The AC power supply eliminates batteries. One converter will power all three lamps.

The Clock

Diagram 1 shows the overall assembly for the clock. Pick a simple clock with no light, separate battery holder, snooze button, or other luxuries. I used a Walmart mini alarm clock. It cost a whopping \$2.88! Get spares; you can afford them! First, stick a battery in each clock and make sure it runs for a week or so. I had two faulty ones. Disassemble the clock by prying off the clear cover. Pull off the second, minute, hour, and alarm hands and then pull off the set and alarm knobs from the back. Then peel off the flexible plastic clock face, which is usually held on by a couple of glue spots. Unscrew the exposed mounting screws and extract the clock (Photo 2).

The Clock Wall

The walls in which the clock will be mounted should be made of a material that is easily cut, drilled, and tapped—1/8" or thicker plastic works fine. The walls should be at least 1/4" (.250") wider than the diameter of the clock bezel. The Blue Diamond lid is 3-1/2" (3.5"), so the wall should be at least $3.5" + .250" = 3.75"$ across. I used a DPM Blank Wall Module from Woodland Scenics. OGR Ameri-Towne or Korber building walls will also work well. If you are going to disguise a Lally column, make sure the clock and wall sections will clear the column. Also, make sure the clock section is easily removable for servicing.

Cut a rectangular opening in the wall the same width as the clock mechanism and 1/4" taller (1/8" top and bottom). Make sure the opening is centered and square to the edges of the wall section. I used a cardboard template and then drilled a series of .070" diameter holes around the perimeter to cut out the hole (Photo 3).

Finish with a file and test fit the clock (Photo 4).

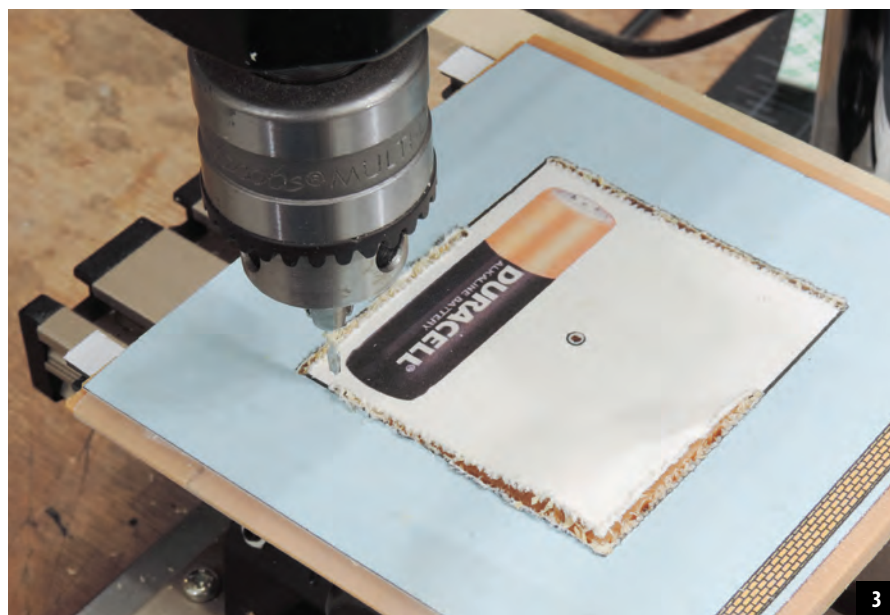
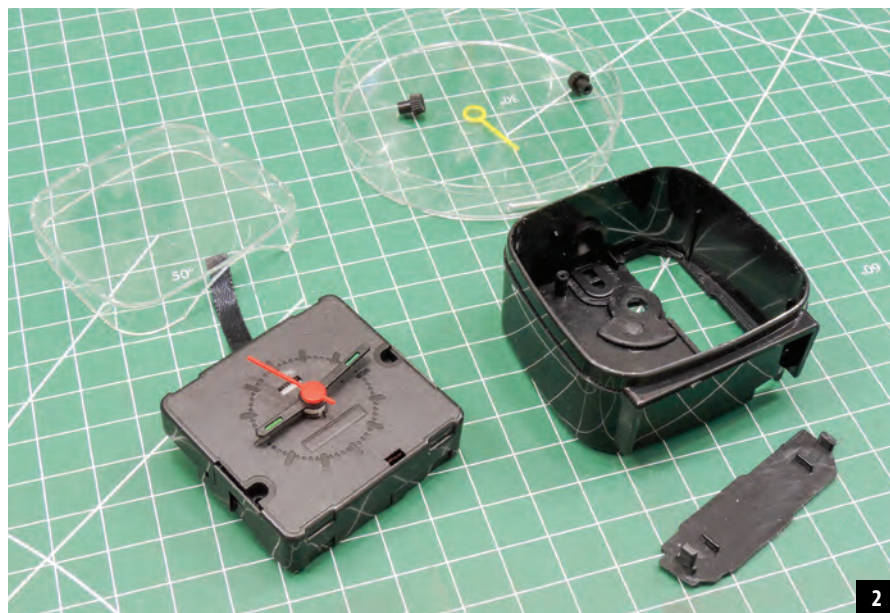
The Clock Dial

The dial consists of the bezel, clock face, EL lamp, spacer blocks, and mounting pads. For the bezel, I simply walked through the local grocery store until I found a lid that fit. The Blue Diamond lids are as large as you can go and still use the Miller Engineering EL lamp.

Cut out the bezel by first scoring a circle with a scribe (Photo 5). Make several passes for a clean cut. Then go around this groove with a #11 blade, making several light passes until the inner flat disk is cut off.

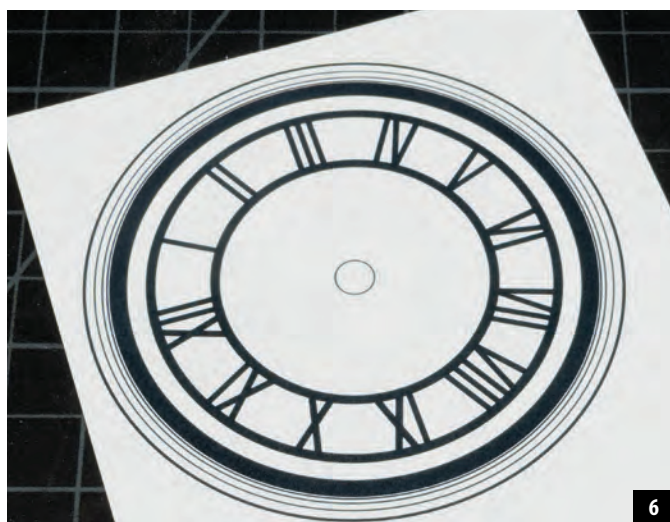
To paint the bezel, wrap aluminum foil around the can and push the bezel on top. To make removal easy, do not push the bezel all the way down. Then apply Testors lacquer gray primer, followed with the color coat. I chose Tamiya green paint because it is durable. I added a gold accent ring with a paint marker.

For the clock face, the EL lamps are a blue-white when on (not very realistic) and pink when off (totally unrealistic), so I printed the clock face on white glossy photo paper and glued that to the lamp. I drew the clock face with Microsoft PowerPoint. Photo 6 shows the newly printed clock face. The circles are important. The thin outer circles enable cutting a smooth concentric circle. Pick the one that fits the bezel best. The 1/8" wide ring straddles the inner cut edge of the bezel and serves multiple purposes. It helps center the clock face; it helps mask any irregularities in your cut of the bezel; and it hides the unlit electrical connection region. The 1/4" hole in the center is for the clock shaft. I suggest practicing all this with cardstock first.





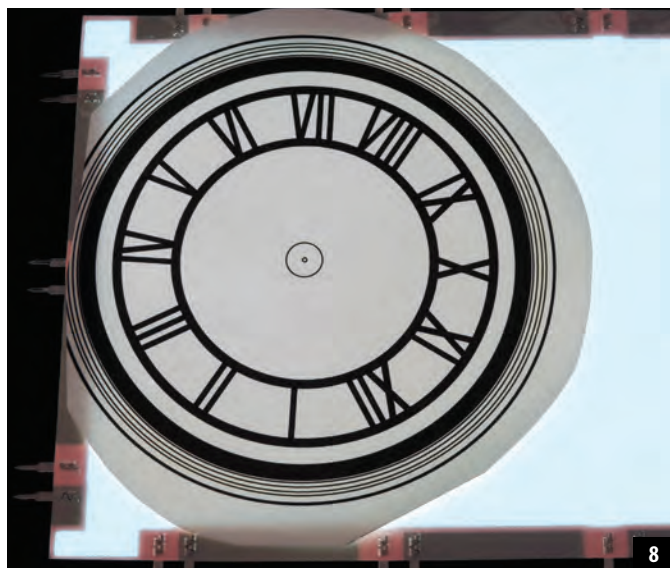
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Spray the image with several light coats of Krylon matte spray. Do *not* use Dullcote! To make the clock face brighter, thin the back of the photo paper after applying the matte spray. Tape the photo paper face down on a piece of glass. Then sand the backside with 220 grit silicon carbide sandpaper to the desired level of transparency. Do *not* use water! Test brightness with a lit EL panel and then apply the matte spray on the backside as well.

Glue the clock face to the transparent (pink) electrode using Formula 560 canopy glue. To prevent warping, apply the glue sparingly around only the outer perimeter and the clock shaft hole (Photo 7).

Positioning the clock face is critical. Note the outermost perimeter is cut flat where one set of lamp connector pins are located. It corresponds to about 3:43 on the clock.

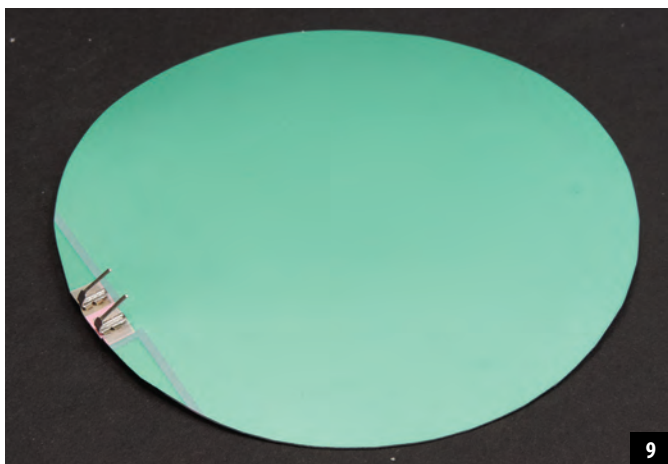
Photo 8 shows another view with the lamp lit. The clock face should be positioned so the 1/8" wide ring covers the unlit portion of the panel *and* so the electrodes are still inside the bezel

region. Test fit everything dry first. Apply the glue and, when the lamp is properly positioned, clamp the clock face down with pieces of foam core and a weight. Then let it set overnight. By the way, note how the glossy photo paper changes the on and off hues of the lamp to something more acceptable.

Cut the clock face with a sharp pair of scissors *only* after the glue is fully cured. Using scissors prevents delaminating the layers, which would cause dark spots. Punch a 1/4" hole in the clock face center from the transparent electrode side. I used a Roper Whitney punch. If one is not available, a brass tube with a sharpened edge, a hammer, and a block of wood can work. I had no luck trying to drill the hole or cutting it out with a #11 blade.

Bend the electrical connector pins back through about 120 degrees. Make the bend point as close as possible to where the pins are clamped to the lamp, but be careful not to disturb the clamps themselves. The pins must be inside the rim of the bezel (Photo 9). Make sure the lamp still works after you bend the pins.

Glue the clock face into the bezel with dabs of Walther's Goo at 1:00, 5:00, and 9:00. Ensure proper concentricity between the bezel and the clock face and then let the Goo set. Use five-minute epoxy to glue four styrene spacers .188" x .188" x .500" long at



1:30, 4:30, 7:30, and 10:30. Make sure the epoxy gets on both the green surface of the lamp and the inside edge of the bezel.

Clamp the whole affair between two pieces of foam core and use weights to make sure the clock face stays flat while the glue sets. Then use five-minute epoxy to glue four clock mounting pads .188" x .375" x .500" at 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, and 9:00. Photo 10 shows the finished piece.

Congratulations, you made it through the hardest part of this project: the clock dial assembly.

Mount the Dial

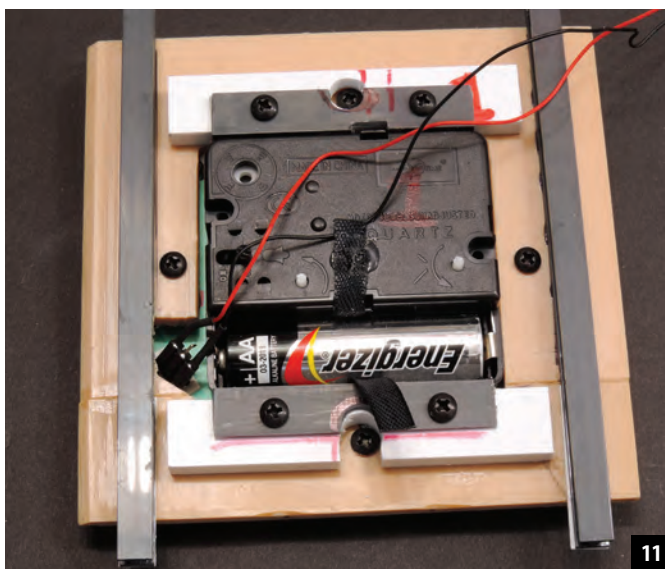
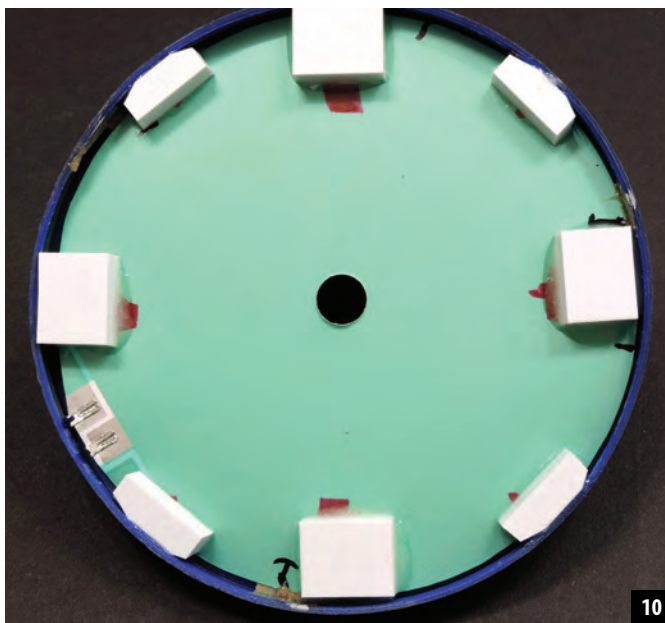
Position the clock dial on the wall so it is centered on the panel and in the proper rotational position. In other words, 12:00 is straight up. Mark where the connector pins are located (about 3:43), remove the dial, and file a clearance notch in the wall for the connectors. Reposition the clock dial (this time with the utmost precision you can muster) and clamp it in place using the 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, and 10:30 spacers. Use a foam core pad to protect the clock face. It is crucial the clock dial not move during the next steps.

Drill #43 holes clear through the wall panel and into each of the 3:00, 6:00, 9:00, and 12:00 pads. The holes do not need to be centered on the pads; just make sure there is ample material to tap the hole. *Do not break through the pads into the rear electrode!*

Undo the clamps and tap the holes in the mounting pads for a 4-40 screw. Drill out the holes in the wall panel with a #33 drill (.113" diameter). Then mount the clock dial assembly to the wall panel using four 4-40 x .250" long screws.

The Clock Mounts

The clock is mounted with 3/8" ABS angles glued to the top and bottom surfaces of the clock. 4-40 x 1/4" screws hold the angles to styrene strips via tapped holes. Those strips are in turn glued to the back side of the wall panel. The screws allow replacement of the clock. Diagram 2 shows the clock mounting brackets—you need two of them. The U-shaped slot allows clearance for the clock dial mounting screws.



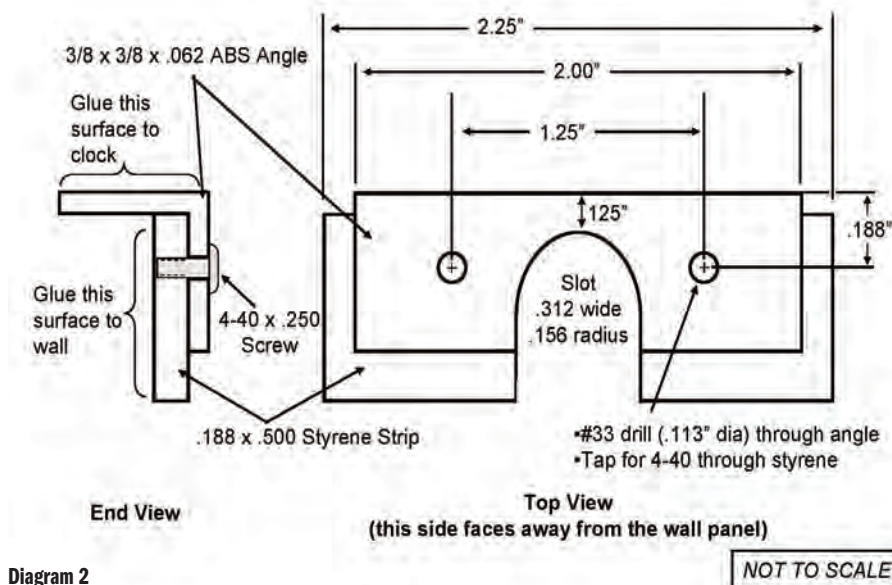


Diagram 2

Parts List for Clock Tower

Description	Manufacturer	Part Number
Nut can lid	Blue Diamond	
Jumbo EL Lamp Experimenters kit	Miller Engineering	2504
Jumbo 4"x 6" EL Lamp	Miller Engineering	4601
Jumbo EL Panel	Miller Engineering	2501
AC power supply	Miller Engineering	4802
Mini clock	Walmart	Model SPC873
4-40 x 1/4" screws	Small Parts	B00F34USTG
JST connectors	Uxcell	035754
DPM blank wall module	Woodland Scenics	90103
Lacquer gray primer	Testors	28137
USAF green spray paint	Tamiya	AS-13
Glossy photo paper	Any brand	
Acrylic matte spray	Krylon	1311
Canopy glue	Pacer	560
Styrene strip .500"x .188"	Evergreen	403
3/8" ABS angles	Plastruct	A-12
Gorilla super glue gel	Gorilla Glue	921C
Clear five-minute epoxy	Loctite	
Oiled Bronze spray paint	Rustoleum	5124
Dullcote	Testors	1260T

Mount the Clock

Insert the clock into the wall panel, centering the shaft in the hole in the clock face. Temporarily hold the mechanism with masking tape. For consistency, I installed all three with the battery compartment down.

Install the brackets by simultaneously gluing the ABS angle to the clock and the styrene strip to the back wall. Use Gorilla super glue, which sets in about 30 seconds. Photo 11 shows the back of a wall panel. Note the red and black wires to the EL lamp. The two vertical ABS H beams are for the building structure and have nothing to do with the clock.

Clock Hands

Cut off the arms of the second hand to make a "hub cap." The minute and hour hands can be left alone. Alternatively, make your own by drawing them on a computer, printing them on glossy photo paper, and attaching them to the existing hands with Goo. I painted the hands and hub cap Oiled Bronze, followed with the ever-popular Dullcote. Obviously the hour and minute hands need to be, if you'll pardon the expression, "clocked." It's easiest to set the clock for high noon. When the hands are firmly in place, plug in the battery. By the way, this would be a good time to make sure the alarm is turned off.

Wire the EL Lamps

Use the Miller Engineering supplied connectors to attach a pair of wires to each lamp. Do not solder to the pins as heat compromises the lamp electrical connection. Solder the free ends of the three pairs of wires to a single male JST connector. The female half of the connector is connected to a pair of wires that goes to the power supply under the layout table. This allows easy removal of the clock section for battery replacement or the semiannual time change.

You may find some of the time-adjustment knobs rub against the Lally column. A rubbing knob will put a battery-consuming drag on the mechanism. Pull them off and save them in a nearby gondola.

That's it! Sit back and enjoy telling time in the dark without having to resort to that pesky smartphone. You will also know when to tell your visitors to leave. As for the inspiration for that clock face, remember the *Back to the Future* movies (Photo 12)?

Layout built on a single memory



A New York Susquehanna and Western Railway trailer-on-flatcar (TOFC) train moves through some gorgeous mountain scenery.

Great Day at Black Rock

Article and Photos by Bill Laughland

The platform at Black Rock Station was almost deserted. The cold west wind of January was whipping snow off the Niagara River. Three boys, anxious to see their dad returning from a two-week business trip across western Canada, stood shivering on the platform. They were watching a distant locomotive's headlight for some sign of movement—an indication that Customs and Immigration had completed their work and the train could enter the United States.

The headlight finally grew brighter as it approached, and a New York Central Pacific came charging into the station, sending swirling snow into the mix of smoke and steam. I can still hear the sounds of hissing steel on steel and the groans along with the smells unique to steam locomotives. We heard the screech of brakes and the final thunk of the cars coming to rest. The door and trap opened, and Dad followed the conductor off the train.

As Dad loaded his suitcase into the trunk of our car, we turned and watched the train leave for nearby Buffalo. This event cast a spell that has remained with me ever since.

Christmas of 1948 brought a Lionel train outfit consisting of a 2-6-2 Prairie steam locomotive, two freight cars, a caboose, and a loop of O gauge track. My older brothers already had a train set, but there were few opportunities for me, as the youngest, to play with their trains. The plan was to build a layout for both train sets in our large unfinished basement. Dad's woodworking ability was next to nonexistent, so the benchwork was left to the 8-, 10-, and 12-year-old boys. We had learned woodworking skills constructing shacks in the woods behind our house. The layout merged O27 and O gauge track into a single-family layout that we enjoyed for many hours.



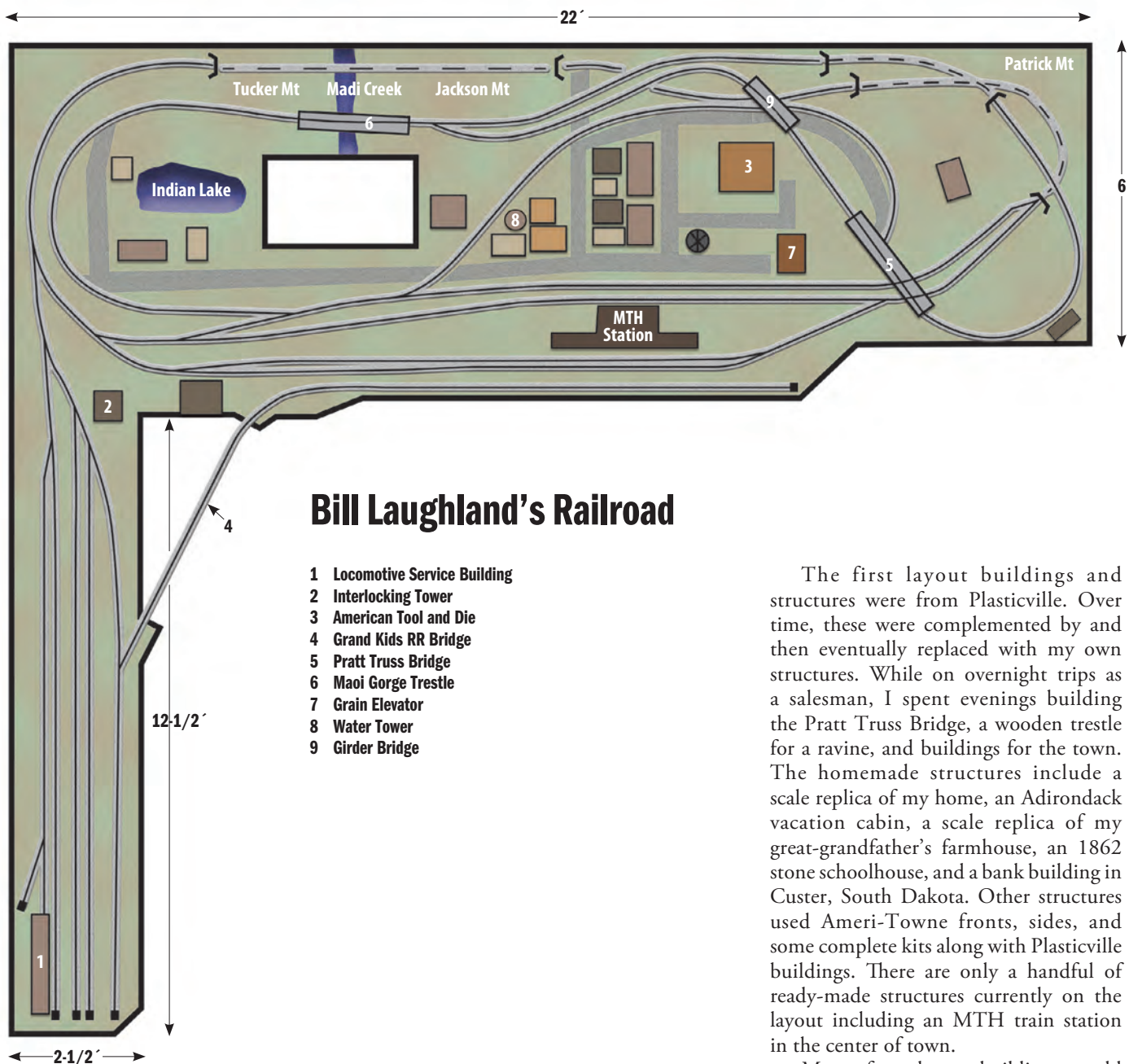
The town of Bridger is served by Amtrak. It may be a small metropolis, but it is a popular way stop for tourists in all seasons of the year.

As an adult, I eventually purchased a home with a 24'x 24' unfinished basement—perfect for a train layout for my two-year-old son and me. The layout was built with a limited budget and constructed with recycled, reused, and repurposed materials. The benchwork began with scrap lumber and shipping crates from a local motorcycle dealer. The original footprint was 6'x 10'. After a few years, it grew to 7'x 23'. Mountains were added using scrap wood and screen trimmings from a local hardware store, covered with a mixture of colored molding plaster.

The Lionel track used earlier was replaced with GarGraves track and Ross switches. These newer products allowed for increased creativity on placement of the roadbed without the limitations of a set radius. Many of the original loops have at least one sharp curve in the 40" range, limiting the use to shorter rolling stock and locomotives. Newer rolling stock and engines have required small modifications to accommodate their increased length. The last major addition to the layout was a 2-1/2'x 12' section to one end of the layout. This section serves as a rail yard for parking the growing menagerie of cars and engines.



Buses and cabs are readily available at the station in Bridger to transport tourists to local hotels, motels, and lodges and to bring them back to the station when it's time to return home.



The first layout buildings and structures were from Plasticville. Over time, these were complemented by and then eventually replaced with my own structures. While on overnight trips as a salesman, I spent evenings building the Pratt Truss Bridge, a wooden trestle for a ravine, and buildings for the town. The homemade structures include a scale replica of my home, an Adirondack vacation cabin, a scale replica of my great-grandfather's farmhouse, an 1862 stone schoolhouse, and a bank building in Custer, South Dakota. Other structures used Ameri-Towne fronts, sides, and some complete kits along with Plasticville buildings. There are only a handful of ready-made structures currently on the layout including an MTH train station in the center of town.

Most of my layout buildings would not have been possible without the Dremel table saw I purchased in the early 1970s. This saw ripped all the stick wood accurately from Midwest slab wood. The first buildings had handmade windows, which required a lot of time. The roofing and windows on the more recent buildings are from Plastruct and Grandt Line. Some of the buildings have roofs made from card stock taken from recycled Christmas cards. All the buildings have grain-of-wheat lights for nighttime scenes. Our grandkids are always asking for the nighttime runs. Propane tanks made from the plastic scoops provided in infant formula cans, fencing made from



Here is a view at track level down the line outside Bridger station.



It appears that the engineer of train 4050 is consulting with a shop foreman to resolve some sort of minor mechanical issue.



Look closely and you'll spot a raccoon on the roof of this modeled house.



The layout scenery has been effectively blended with the backdrop painting so the transition between scenery and backdrop appears seamless.



A TOFC train winds its way along gentle curves through the mountains.



The 801 Delaware & Hudson emerges from a tunnel into the picturesque mountain valley.



Thomas the Tank Engine along with Annie and Clarabel travel the rails of the Grandkids RR.



A dedicated line near the layout's front edge allows the grandkids to enjoy the layout in a hands-on and up-close manner.



Plenty of hard work abounds along the track in the Adirondacks.

screen scraps, and many other scavenged and repurposed materials accent the buildings and town. Building these has fostered creativity and resourcefulness that would have been missed had they been purchased ready-made.

Creating landscapes for the structures and trains is enjoyable and completes the visual environment as the trains are moving through the scene. The track is painted, ballasted, and modeled to look like the real thing. The mountains and rock cuts have layered and painted Styrofoam added to provide the appearance of stratified rock formations or stone masonry at tunnel entrances. An interest in geology helped in creating realistic rock cuts.

The trees and ground foam come from Woodland Scenics. Some trees are homemade. Deciduous trees are mostly dried plants from our garden, and many of the evergreens come from after-Christmas sales of garland at the local craft store. The garland is cut branch by branch with wire cutters, shaped into trees, and then glued, and foam is added for texture. The Rocky and Adirondack Mountains on the basement walls are hand-painted to give forced perspective and depth. The Rockies are on the right half of the layout as the background for the town of Bridger, and the Adirondacks are on the left half behind the cabin and lake scene.

This layout is a compilation of many blended scenes and settings, such as from the townspeople of Bridger going about their daily routines, people hiking in the mountains, a group of schoolchildren playing in the schoolyard, and yard and factory workers toiling at different tasks.

The figures are from Artista, Preiser, MTH, Lionel, and other sources. Many of the scenes are reminiscent of places or experiences my family has had including a model of our house complete with the raccoon that nested in the chimney the year it was modeled, the minivan in the driveway, and matching landscapes.

Over the years, the layout has morphed into a hi-rail layout, and because there had never been a long-term plan, additions and expansions resulted in a hodgepodge of electrical connections. The use of random wires of various colors became problematic when electrical problems occurred. It took Hurricane Lee in 2011 to help rewire the layout. The sixteen inches of forecasted rain threatened to send the small creek in our backyard over its banks and flood the basement. Our daughter alerted me that ground water had started to leak into the basement. I went to the basement with wire cutters in hand and started cutting wires to remove hardware while my daughter loaded the buildings, rolling stock, and accent pieces into boxes and totes to carry upstairs. Although the area did flood, the basement remained relatively dry. This provided the opportunity to organize, rewire, and color-code the entire electrical system.



This setting is of early summer in the Rockies.



This is another view of the town of Bridger from the "other side of the tracks."



Here east meets west, fortunately on separate tracks.

The layout is set in the present-day period to allow different architectural possibilities and the freedom to run any kind of motive power and rolling stock. The layout might have a modern intermodal container train pulled by a Dash-9 passing a heavyweight passenger train pulled by a Lionel 2-6-2 Prairie. The mainline motive power includes a Williams D&H SD45, a Lionel BNSF Dash-9 with TMCC, an MTH SD70 under DCS control, a Lionel Long Island GP20 with a dummy GP20 unit, and a Lionel 2-6-2 Prairie. Lionel's Thomas the Tank Engine pulling Annie and Clarabel will also make the rounds when the grandkids are in charge of the layout. Rolling stock includes Lionel, MTH, K-Line, Williams, and Atlas O cars as well as a few Walthers heavyweight passenger cars built from kits.

One of the true joys resulting from this hobby is the excitement that comes from sharing it with others, especially children. For many years my son played on the layout with his small Airfix WWII plastic army figures, and for the last few years there have been four grandkids running down to the basement to play with Grandpa's trains. Initially, their play was restricted in order to protect the layout. This could have led to an eventual loss of interest because they wanted to play with the trains versus just watching them go around.

The solution was the addition of a dedicated track all the way across the front of the layout. It includes a few yards of track including a girder bridge on the track marked "GRANDKIDS RR." At first it was not electrified, but that changed

because the kids liked the smoke, horn, and lights of the locomotive, passenger cars, and caboose. The kids also wanted to play with the trains by hand, so there was a need for locomotives that moved without electric power. The 2-6-2 Prairie was ideal for this along with the GP20 dummy. A trip to the local train shop and train show to purchase six gondolas and a couple of postwar Lionel steamers filled out the roster of rolling stock for the Grandkids RR. The kids like filling the gondolas with anything that is loose on the layout, such as ballast, stones, trees, people, cars, horses, and wooden blocks. Newer freight consists of Thomas the Tank wooden trains and Lightning McQueen cars along with a vast variety of Legos. A brief stint at the workbench usually fixes the couple of minor glue jobs after the children leave and is a small price to pay for the enjoyment we get from the set.

My two younger grandsons are learning how to operate TMCC, and our oldest grandson is mastering DCS. There is no doubt in our house about where the next generation of model railroaders is coming from. Giving them hands-on experience has certainly enhanced their interest in the hobby. The next step is to give each grandchild a tote that comes with trains, track, a transformer, and buildings so they, too, can use their imagination to create their own memories of train layouts as kids. Looking back, they may remember their days as engineer on Grandpa's railroad.

That day on the platform at Black Rock Station is long passed, but the feeling

of awe has never left, and the spell that held me that day has fueled a lifelong enthusiasm for trains and model railroading. The town of Bridger and its four young engineers have caught the spell, and that magic I experienced in the swirl of snow and steam so long ago will almost certainly carry on with them. 🚂



About the Author

Bill and his wife Gail live in Endicott, New York. Bill worked for Burroughs Wellcome Co. as a sales representative before retiring and now drives a school bus part-time. He also coaches the River Raiders, a Girl Scout canoe team, and has served 40 years as a volunteer leader for both the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. When not working on his layout, Bill enjoys canoeing and wilderness camping as well as participating in ice hockey during the winter months. He and Gail also enjoy frequent visits with the grandkids in Saranac Lake, New York, and Conway, New Hampshire.

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Birneys...and a Berk Addendum

In this issue the focus will be on two different subjects. You might want to think of this column as an editorial main course with an interesting side dish. (Photos 1 and 2)

Collector Club Single-Truck Birneys: A Pleasant Discovery

Normally I would not give the modern Lionel single-truck, four-wheel Birney trolleys a second glance. After all, it should be beneath any self-respecting adult collector to bother with anything so far down the Lionel food chain when there are so many other good choices to examine and collect—and in the modern age of collecting even operate—in the Lionel O gauge product line.

The Birney trolleys that were produced for the Lionel Collectors Club of America and the Train Collectors Association annual meetings in 2014 and 2015 prompted a serious attitude readjustment and a bit of embarrassment on my part for having missed the collector potential of these little motorized units. The current crop of Lionel single-truck, four-wheel Birney bumper trolleys traces its heritage back to the postwar



No. 60 red-roofed, yellow-bodied Birney motorized units of 1955–1958 with Lionelville Rapid Transit written on the sides in either black or blue, a heavy open-framed motor, and a spring bumper on the ends for bump and reverse operation (Photo 3). The new trolleys work the same way, reversing when they bump into an obstacle, but they are significantly different cosmetically and mechanically.

The LCCA Birneys

The 2014 LCCA annual convention was held in Indianapolis, Indiana, and these two trolleys pay homage to that part of the country. The 6-58586 Registration Trolleys were given to the first 400 attendees who both registered for the convention and stayed at the convention hotel. This trolley has a flat-finished silver roof with two movable spring-loaded trolley poles



4

and orange sides and ends with maroon trim in shades reminiscent of Milwaukee Road livery (Photo 4). There are silver railings on the lower part of the side windows, silhouettes representing the passengers in the side windows, a motor-man and operating LEDs on each end, and an incandescent bulb in the middle of the body to light the silhouettes. The sides have the South Shore Line logo in maroon, edged in gold, and showing gold letters. There is a smaller version of the South Shore Line logo on both ends of the trolley, and one end has the number “14” with “Registration Gift” printed in a circle around it. Each side has a small set of markings that read “58586, Built by Lionel 2014” (Photo 5).

The Banquet Trolley was given as a prize to one very lucky person who sat at each banquet table at the formal dinner and festivities that climaxed the annual LCCA convention. Since there were no more than 60 tables at the banquet dinner, there were far fewer 6-58587 Banquet Trolleys given out than the Registration Trolleys. Offers for them



5



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were in the 300 to 400 dollar range immediately after the dinner from those who just had to have one.

The paint scheme for the Banquet Trolley was the reverse of the more numerous Registration Trolleys with the sides and ends being maroon and the trim done in orange. It produced a striking color combination on the Birney and made this instantly rare trolley all the more desirable in the eyes of collectors (Photo 6). The rest of the letters and markings are the same for both trolleys, with two exceptions: The small set of markings on the sides carry the number "58587," and one end of the trolley has the number "10" with "Banquet Gift" circling the number (Photo 7).

Underneath, each trolley has two center-rail rollers and a traction tire on one of the four wheels. The trolleys are also marked with "LCCA 2014" in white on the structure supporting their silver/gray plastic bumpers (Photo 8).

The LCCA chose Boston, Massachusetts, for its 2015 annual convention, which gave the designers of the paint schemes for the two convention trolleys a variety of appropriate decorative choices.

The 6-58588 Registration Trolley is finished in tan on the top half and orange/



8



9

brown on the bottom half of the sides and ends. Above the side windows is printed "One if by Land, Two if by Sea," and below the protective railings on the side windows are three colorful images spaced across the bottom of the trolley (Photo 9). "Boston Trolley" encircles a head-on view of the trolley, the middle is occupied by the stylized slogan "Chowder & Choo Chos", and the third is a maroon-trimmed white rectangle featuring an

elaborately illustrated color picture of the *USS Constitution* in full sail with "See Old Ironsides" and "USS Constitution, Boston Navy Yard" written below it (Photos 10, 11, and 12). The ends have three silver wings flanking the LED headlight, and above the silhouetted passenger getting off the Birney is the number 45 located just under the flat-silver roof. One end also has "Registration Car 15" printed on it (Photo 13).



The Banquet Car has the same elaborate decorations on its flanks and ends as the more common Registration Car, but the 6-58589 is painted in just the opposite colors on the sides and ends (Photos 14, 15, and 16). The top half of the car is resplendent in orange/brown and the bottom is painted in tan (Photo 17). In addition, one end of the Banquet Trolley carries "Banquet Car 11" on it.

The TCA Trolleys

The 2015 Train Collectors Association annual meeting was hosted by the Metropolitan Division of the TCA (METCA), and meeting activities and layout visits were held in the Tri-State area of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The graphic designers of the two Lionel-

produced TCA trolleys used the rich local history of streetcar operations in the Tri-State area on both sides of the Hudson River for their inspiration, and the end result was two very good-looking Birney trolleys.

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17

The 6-58238, the deep maroon-and-white Bergen County Traction Company Birney with a silver stripe around the body, commemorated passenger service to the famous Palisades Amusement Park

that overlooked the Hudson River from the New Jersey side (Photo 18). On both sides below the passenger windows is a detailed Public Service circular logo in blue, gold, white, and red, with a red tri-

angle thickly outlined in the center of the logo (Photo 19). Both ends of the trolley carry the year 2015 in white below the silver stripe that encircles the Birney. The word "Palisades" appears on the lighted

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18



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20

rectangular sign positioned just beneath the flat-silver roof.

The Coney Island and Brooklyn Railroad trolley is resplendent in its green and white livery with a red band circling its body (Photo 20). The 6-58237 celebrates the ride to the world-famous Coney Island Amusement Park in Brooklyn, New York, which still exists. Both sides of the green-and-white Birney carry the rectangular BMT Lines logo in red, gold, and white (Photo 21). The ends of the trolley have white 2015 numbers on them just below the red band. Under the roof, the rectangular sign lit from the inside reads “Boardwalk.”

I would like to acknowledge the good folks at the Train Collectors Association for letting us have the two 2015 Annual Meeting Birneys used for this article. My thanks go to Bob Zubonski, chairman of the TCA Museum Education Committee, Russ Keil, president of the Atlantic Division, and Tammy Hersh, office manager at TCA National.

Comparisons

Comparing one of the 2015 Birneys with an earlier model Birney demonstrates how far these trolleys have come in terms of appearance and operation. This is the 6-8690 of 1986–1987, which is an improved version of the postwar No. 60 Birney done in the official Lionel colors of orange and blue with plastic sheathed bumpers and “8690 Lionel Lines” on the sides (Photo 22). It is an attractive trolley and runs well, if a little loudly, but it looks crude next to the 6-58589 LCCA Banquet Car (Photo 23). The reversible trolley pole is the same old bent piece of silver wire used on the postwar No. 60, and the sheathed bumpers have a chunky appearance that makes them look too big for the short Birney body, which is a little over 6-1/2” long. The new Birneys have bumpers that are much better proportioned for the body, and fixed trolley poles eliminate problems that the single, reversible trolley pole sometimes caused with actuating the bumper feature.

The LCCA chose to use the tooling for the protective railings covering the bottom half of the side windows for its trolleys, which dramatically changes their appearance and makes the stubby Birney bodies appear longer.



21



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23

The close-up photos Rich Melvin took of the Birneys demonstrate just how sharp the decorative details are on all six trolleys. His images are the equivalent of using a magnifying glass to view them. As you can see, the enlarged images still look crisp. The decoration on the 6-58589, the LCCA 2015 Banquet Car, is a prime example of what is possible with leading-edge pad printing techniques. The silhouettes of the passengers of these current production Birneys are dressed in clothing from the 1940s and 1950s, and that is a detail that also adds to their appeal.

Lighting on the new Birneys is much more reliable, thanks to the LEDs specified for the directional headlights. The owners manual for the Birneys states, "The headlights are illuminated by LEDs which are expected to last for the lifetime of this product." The interior lamp that lights up the motormen and the passengers is a different story. It is a regular incandescent bulb, and the constant impacts of the reversing bumpers adversely affects bulb life, which is why each trolley is supplied with a spare bulb.

Are the new lighter trolley innards as sturdy as the heavy mechanisms of the old trolleys? The answer is no, but they work more smoothly than their predecessors and are sturdy enough to operate reliably for hours and days at a time. This is backed up by the experiences of the TCA Museum staff with the new Birneys and the LCCA convention volunteers who operated their club trolleys not very gently for two years at the annual meetings, plus my own experience extensively running the Birneys that I have.

Collectibility

There are several reasons why I think these Birneys are collectible, especially in this age of tight budgets for many O gauge collectors. They are undeniably attractive with appealing paint schemes that are historically significant. They make




24



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colorful shelf pieces and run well, which is a positive consideration for many O gauge collectors these days. All six of them are single-run items that were made in relatively small quantities. According to Lionel, the minimum order quantity for these motorized units is 500 pieces. Given the number of persons who typically attend the Train Collectors Association national conventions, the number of Birneys produced for the 2015 TCA national convention in the Tri-State area was probably approximately equivalent to the LCCA totals. Checking club contacts and examining Internet sites indicate that four out of six of the trolleys can be had for less than \$100 each. The only ones that are a bit pricey are the LCCA Banquet Trolleys that were made in such small quantities for the 2014 and 2015 national conventions. Since they are harder to find, it only adds to the spice of trying to acquire all six Birneys.

Acting on Heretical Thoughts about a Century Club Berk

In Run 286, the August/September 2016 issue, I took exception to the 646/2046 small Hudson smokebox front that was used on the 6-18053 Century Club Berkshire 726 "approximation" instead of the proper Berkshire smokebox front and headlight. The red sign with "726" in white that hung under the 646/2046 style of smokebox front was especially jarring (Photo 24). It seemed that replacing the 726 "red nose" look would turn the 6-18053 into a more appropriate stand-in for the original 1946-1949 vintage 726, even though making such a change was collector heresy bordering on blasphemy (Photo 25). I did it anyway, and here is the end result. What do you think? Was that heresy or part of a legitimate quest for a more authentic postwar replica? 



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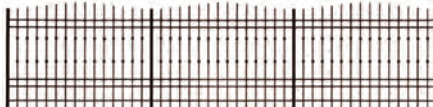
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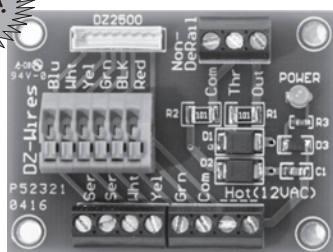
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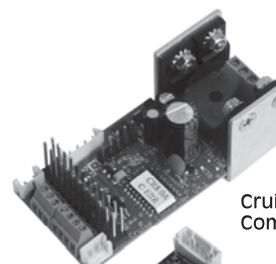
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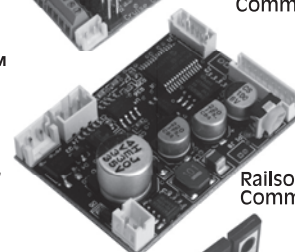
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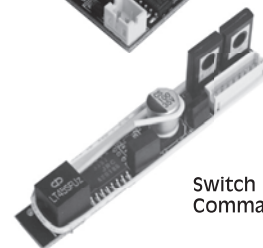
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Whether to Weather

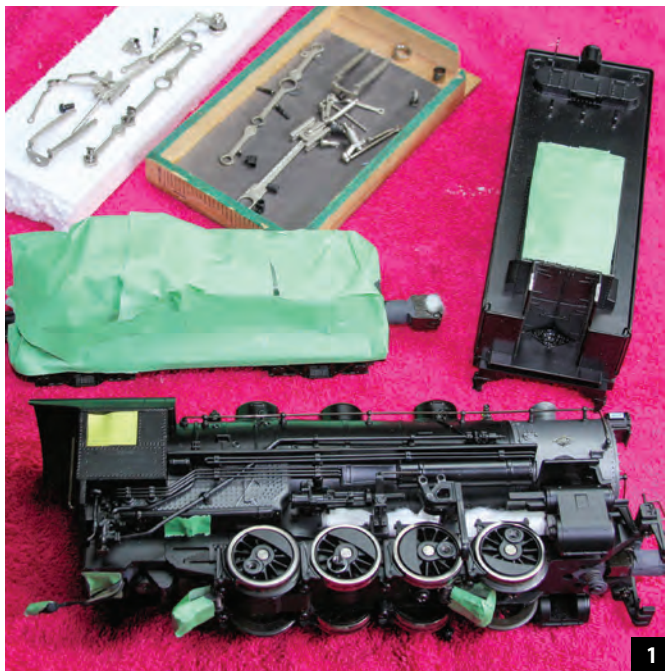
Article and Photos by Daniel Kleine

I'm often asked why I weather my equipment. Well, since a picture is supposed to be worth a whole bunch of words, I've put together a short photo album to illustrate my thinking. The photos were taken over the course of three years. This is not really an article on weathering; it is just meant to show the difference a little dirt can make. I weather some models quite heavily and others more lightly. In either case the applied weathering brings out the details and eliminates that shiny plastic look.

Some people are afraid to try their hand at weathering. Personally, I think it is a lot of fun, not unlike playing in the dirt as a kid. I started by weathering buildings, later graduated to rolling stock, and finally applied my techniques to engines.

My recommendation is to first try your hand on an old or scrap model that you don't care about. In the closing days of steam on the railroads, engines that were destined for the scrap yard received little maintenance. They were literally run into the ground. If you feel like you need to take a shower after weathering one of your old steam engines, you have probably done a darn good job.

There have been many good articles over the years that describe specific weathering techniques, so I will not go into all the dirty details. When planning weathering projects, it's best to start by studying photos and color videos of prototype equipment, followed by looking at photos of weathered models that have been completed by others. I disassemble as much of the model as makes sense and set up the parts for airbrushing. I brush Micro Mask liquid masking tape on any parts that I want to keep clear or transparent, such as windows, headlights, number boards, and the like. Tape and cotton balls will protect areas that you don't want gummed up with paint (Photo 1). Then I airbrush very thin coats of grime on the sides of the model and grimy black on the roof. This gives the model an overall flat and faded look and provides tooth for the weathering powders that will follow. I use different powders: some purchased, some homemade. An airbrush is certainly not a requirement. You can do as well with just chalks and powder, protecting the application of these products with a spray of clear fixative. The following series of before-and-after

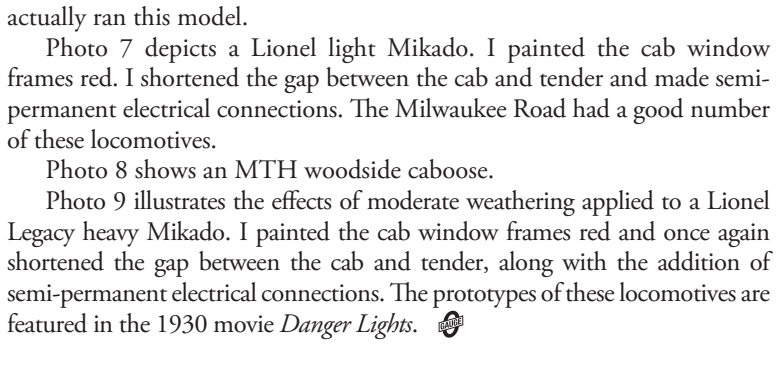
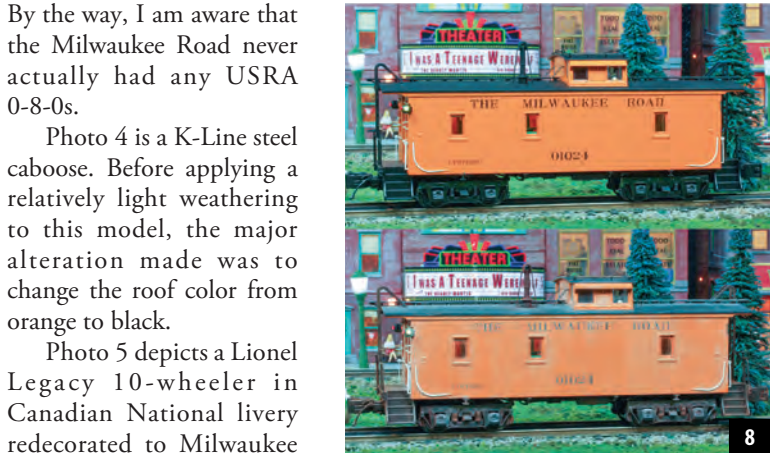


photographs of several items in my collection will give you a pretty good idea of the realism added to models by weathering.

Photo 2 depicts an Atlas SW900 TMCC custom-run switcher that has received a fairly heavy weathering treatment, similar to what might be seen on aged and well-used motive power. In addition to the weathering treatment, I also changed the toy couplers to scale and added a baffle to the stack.

Photo 3 shows a Lionel Legacy 0-8-0 steam switcher that originally bore L&N livery, which I redecorated to Milwaukee Road. I painted the cab window frames red. I shortened the gap between the cab and the tender by fabricating a shorter drawbar from brass. To improve performance, I also made semi-permanent electrical connections between the engine and tender.





By the way, I am aware that the Milwaukee Road never actually had any USRA 0-8-0s.


Photo 4 is a K-Line steel caboose. Before applying a relatively light weathering to this model, the major alteration made was to change the roof color from orange to black.

Photo 5 depicts a Lionel Legacy 10-wheeler in Canadian National livery redecorated to Milwaukee Road. I removed the white walls and shortened the engine-to-tender connection including the addition of semi-permanent electrical connections between the tender and engine.

Photo 6 shows a K-line FM H24-66. The Milwaukee Road never actually ran this model.

Photo 7 depicts a Lionel light Mikado. I painted the cab window frames red. I shortened the gap between the cab and tender and made semi-permanent electrical connections. The Milwaukee Road had a good number of these locomotives.

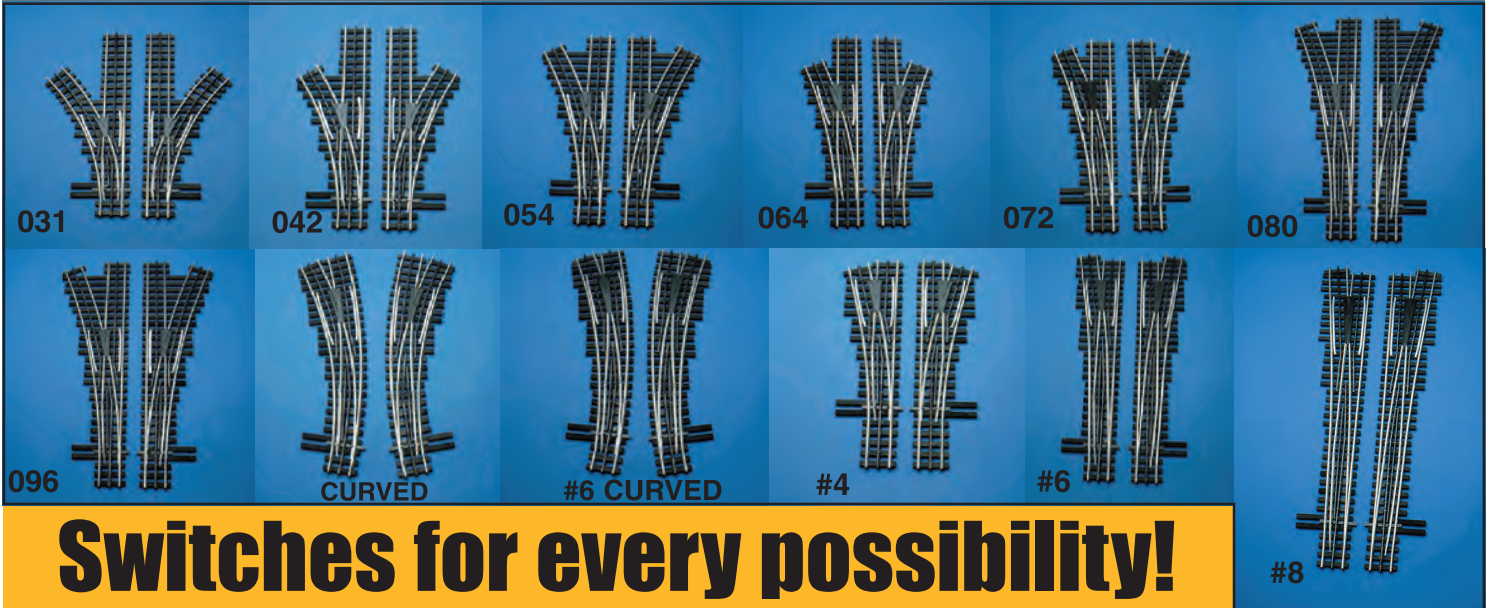
Photo 8 shows an MTH woodside caboose.

Photo 9 illustrates the effects of moderate weathering applied to a Lionel Legacy heavy Mikado. I painted the cab window frames red and once again shortened the gap between the cab and tender, along with the addition of semi-permanent electrical connections. The prototypes of these locomotives are featured in the 1930 movie *Danger Lights*. 

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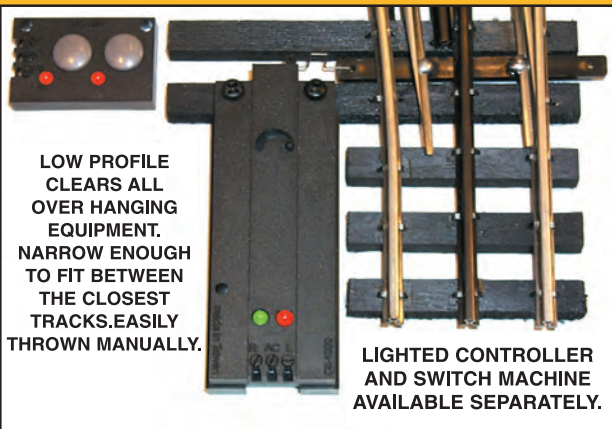
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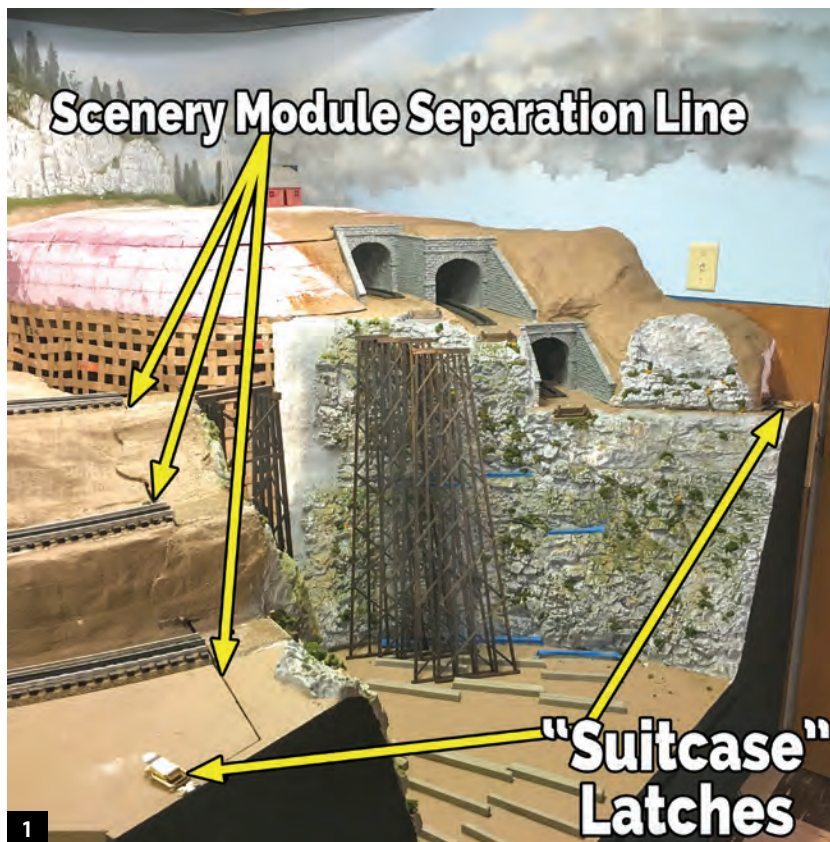
Building a Layout: Creating Scenery Access Ports

Back a few issues ago in Run 273, we made a removable rollaway section of the layout. If you look at Photo 1, you can see the section locked into the main layout. I have a lot of work to do yet on the trestles and other scenery, but this is an opportune time to talk about and show what I call scenery access ports. These are loosely defined as key locations in the scenery that can, when needed, be easily removed to allow access to things inside or behind the scenery like a train that may have derailed inside the mountain, for example.

Look carefully in the lower left portion of the photo and you will see an uneven line in the hillside. In the near future that irregular line will be easily disguised by weeds and other foliage. The line is actually the separation point of the movable module that will contain the valley you see in the photo as well as three railroad trestles when the scenery is finished.

The rollout module idea was born of the necessity to get behind the trestle assembly both for construction of the back of the layout and also to be able to service hidden trains when they need attention.

The movable trestle assembly is the largest scenery access port I've ever attempted. At first it seemed like an impossibility, but when



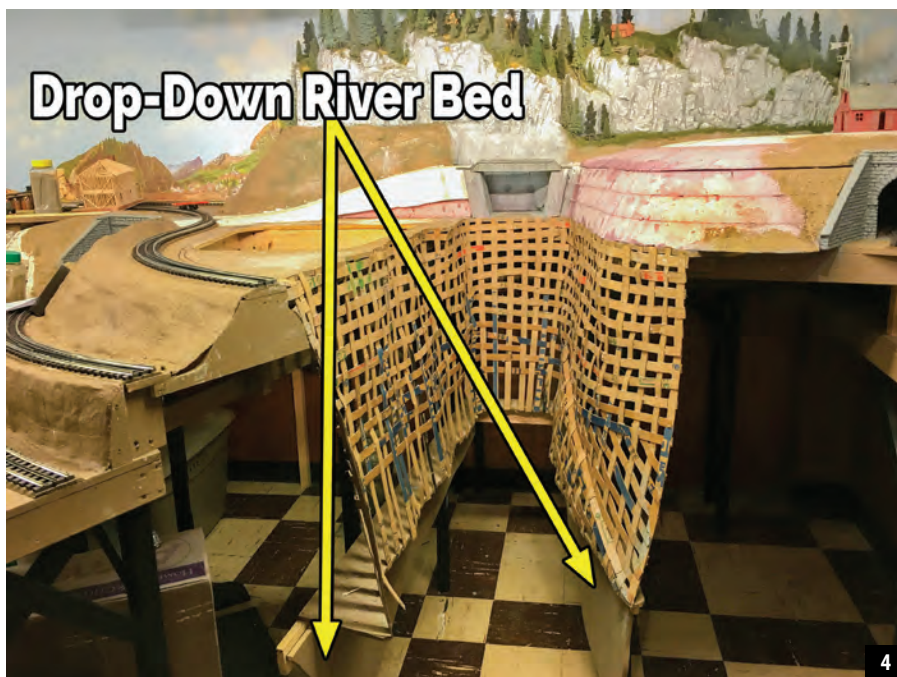
I found a source for heavy commercial grade wheels, it really became doable. If maintenance is ever needed, the trestle module will be unsnapped (note the suitcase-style snap in the foreground of the photo), and all three trestles plus the canyon itself will separate and roll out of the way to gain access deep inside the mountain. Compare Photo 1 with Photo 2 to see the beginning of the trestle rollout module.

Photo 3 might not look like much, but it shows the early stages of making the ravine that will lead back into the mountain. The back of the ravine will be dominated by a waterfall coming from a mountain stream that will emerge from under the highway bridge. The waterfall will end with a river running down the floor of the ravine (painted brown for the time being).

The riverbed floor has a trick built into it. The disappearing drop-down riverbed is hinged on both sides with an irregular saw cut split down the middle, which will be disguised by the river water itself at a later date. Kicking the single hinged leg inward, as shown at the bottom of Photo 3, allows both halves of the riverbed to drop out (Photo 4). That will allow me to walk all the way back to the face of the mountain just behind what will become the waterfall area.

Right behind the highway bridge over that future waterfall, shown at the back of Photo 4, I will need to get access through to the inside of the mountain. Just inside or behind the mountain, right at that point, is a hidden track switch. Yes, to be sure, try to avoid this if at all possible because Murphy's Law says that if it is possible for a train to derail at the most inaccessible point, it will. But when you can't avoid it, always plan on being able to get to the trouble spot quickly and easily by incorporating some easily removed scenery sections so you can get to the derailment or other problems without too much trouble. In my case, Styrofoam lends itself to making easily concealed access ports in the scenery.

As covered in Run 279, my mountain is composed of two large cast mountain scenery pieces raised up on some pink Styrofoam to give them enough height to cover (mostly) a vertical sewer stack.



I stacked up three pieces of 2" Styrofoam to make the base for this mountain. Just behind the base is that critical track with a switch that allows the upper-level train to spiral down through the mountain. That will present another great mountain scene where the train pops out of the mountain tunnel opening onto one of the three trestles stretching over the huge river gorge and then back into the mountain, continuing its spiral down to the lower-level track.

As shown in Photo 5, I have lifted out my highway bridge to expose the chunk of movable Styrofoam that in Photo 6 has been pushed back inside the mountain. In its finished form, I will not be able to remove that Styrofoam access port by pulling it forward and removing it from the front. That's because the scenic materials for my future rip-roaring mountain stream will be right in front of the access port area. The build-up of that scenic water material will prevent



that you'll be able to see the problem by peering through the access port. Even something as simple as a single AAA battery-powered LED keychain light will work nicely. Thanks to LED technology, something that small will provide an amazing amount of light. These little things are available at hardware store checkout counters at a very low cost.

If there isn't any scenery water to worry about on your layout, perhaps just a simple piece of scrap Styrofoam with trees "planted" in it might work. The removable piece could be simply lifted out of the way to expose a nice open access hole.

Anything that gives you access to hidden parts of the layout can be a movable scenery access port. It doesn't necessarily have to be just finished rural scenery. If your layout has urban scenery, such as offices or commercial buildings, they, too, can form a scenery access port. In Photo 9 my Ameri-Towne #941 Barrettsburg Factory looks like an impressive part of this industrial park, but what it really does is hide a tunnel through the wall just on the other side of it. If there's a problem in the tunnel, the whole building can simply be lifted up and out (Photo 10). That will allow access to the tunnel as well as to the siding going inside the building. All the building needs are some locator pins inserted into the layout table at the interior corners of the building. In Photo 10 one of those locator pins is visible below the red gondola with the culvert load. That pin allows the building to be set back in the same place every time.

Because of the sheer size of O gauge, we need to be smart about how we use layout table space. Any trick we can come up with, such as removable scenery access ports, helps us use that space wisely. Keep the concept of removable access ports in mind as you build your own layout and as you design scenery. Any trick like this that enhances the overall effect of your layout adds to its "wow factor." 🛠️

me from pulling the Styrofoam chunk out of the wall to open up the scenery port. That means for the access port to work, it will have to be able to push back inside the mountain and out of the way. By doing that, I will be able to gain access to the track switch inside (Photo 7). That will enable me to fix the mockup derailment of the UP hopper shown in the photo.

Once any operating problem is solved, replacing the movable piece is

easy and quick. In the Styrofoam I put a couple of holes large enough for a thumb and index finger (Photos 5 and 6 again) so I can easily pull it back in place when I am finished (Photo 8). Don't worry about those two holes; they will be easily disguised with scenery tricks like foliage or bushes. If space permits, you can even place a tree on the wall to use as a handle for the Styrofoam port. A word to the wise: Leave a nice small battery-powered LED utility light inside the mountain so



7



8



9



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Wooden Cars and Craftsmanship



As mentioned in our feature on the Kingston Model Railroad Club's Hudson Valley Lines earlier in this issue, the club's rolling stock is a mixture of contemporary ready-to-run cars and those built years ago from kits. Several of the cars from long-vanished kit manufacturers are visible in photos of the Hudson Valley Lines, such as the three ancient 40' boxcars coupled together and crossing a truss bridge. How do I know these cars were built by past modelers? The stamped metal roof ribs that are hand applied rarely lay absolutely flat against the roof. Of course, the jpg photo files that I enlarged made spotting the old cars relatively easy. Another old kit car that was easy to spot is the heavyweight passenger car at the MacGuinnes Junction depot. I believe that car may be an N&W 60' coach kit from Walthers.

For those O gauge railroaders who have been involved with the hobby in one way or another for a number of years, try maybe 60 or more, names of kit manufacturers can be as nostalgic as those of real railroad manufacturers from the same era. All Nation, Ambroid, Athearn,

Kasiner, General Models, Walthers, and Westbrook seem to go along with Alco, Baldwin, Budd, Fairbanks-Morse, Lima, Pullman, and so forth. In the eras before and after WWII, the only way to have rolling stock on an O scale layout was to construct the cars from kits or from wood and metal. Let's take a brief look at two representative freight car kits from the late 1940s and early 1950s.

An entry-level kit for its time was the Westbrook wood sheathed 40' Pacific Fruit Express reefer (Photo 1). Except for the stamped roof ribs and cast ice hatches, the kit's structural components are wood: roof, ends, floor, and various sizes of strips for the underbelly beam and roof walk. It's interesting to note that this is a really basic kit with almost no details. However, the more skillful or enthusiastic builder had the option of buying a separate-sale Westbrook detail kit that included ladders, grab irons, stirrups, brake appliances, door hardware, and so forth. Unfortunately, I've not found any detail kits for my Westbrook cars.

In many cases including this particular Westbrook kit, the underbelly structures

had to be cut from the supplied wooden strips and sanded to the proper shape. Also, supports for the roof walk were to be cut from small wooden strips and glued into place between the walk and roof.

All of the wooden components are glued together, which is an art within itself, and also nailed securely using a bunch of tiny nails called escutcheon pins and a small tack hammer. Choices for glue were varied, but one of the more popular ones was Ambroid, which dried in a distinctive amber color. Precise placing and driving of the escutcheon pins was paramount to a neatly constructed car.

When assembling stamped metal sides to a wooden roof and floor, such as on an All Nation or Walthers heavyweight passenger car, Pliobond or Goo were popular contact adhesives. Escutcheon pins weren't normally employed on passenger car kits.

For my example Westbrook reefer kit, both of the pre-painted sides are sheets of thin plywood factory-scored to look like planking. The pre-painted ends, roof cover, and trim strips are a thin cardstock. These pre-painted pieces were somewhat of a luxury for that era in that many railcar kits were bare wood or metal with decals sometimes included. The modeler always had to paint either some or the entire car, usually using various sizes of camel's hair brushes depending on what was being painted. Of course, no small amount of care was needed to keep from corrupting the pre-painted sides.

The more affluent modeler could own and employ an airbrush—I was in the brush class of modelers and also had to learn the proper way to clean a brush so it could repeatedly produce a respectable paint job over a number of projects. Popular model railroad paint brands were Hi-Ball, 410-M, Floquil, and others. As a side note, although both the paints and glues of the postwar era were toxic, most modelers back then knew how to handle and work with them—and also how not to.


More expensive kits were from Athearn, such as the 40' Swift steel reefer (Photo 2). In addition to the wooden structural components, the more realistic ends and roof are stamped steel overlays. Of course, the lithographed sides are also steel as is the metal underframe. Obviously someone in the past assembled the underframe to the car's wooden floor. Also sometime between the kit being packaged years ago and my acquiring it, the Athearn-supplied two-rail trucks and dummy scale couplers with their draft gear disappeared.

The small manila envelope with the kit contains the metal detail parts including roof ribs, ladders, grab irons, ice hatches, brake appliances, and so forth. Oh, and a packet of escutcheon pins is also inside the envelope. Athearn's illustrated assembly instructions, created by an accomplished draftsman, were some of the best in the industry at that time—and vastly superior to today's abbreviated pictograms (Photo 3).

Some boxcar, reefer, and passenger car kits had cast metal ends that were usually screwed to the wooden roof and floor. The castings replaced the wooden structural ends such as those in my two example kits. Walthers was a prime distributor of freight and passenger car kits with cast ends.

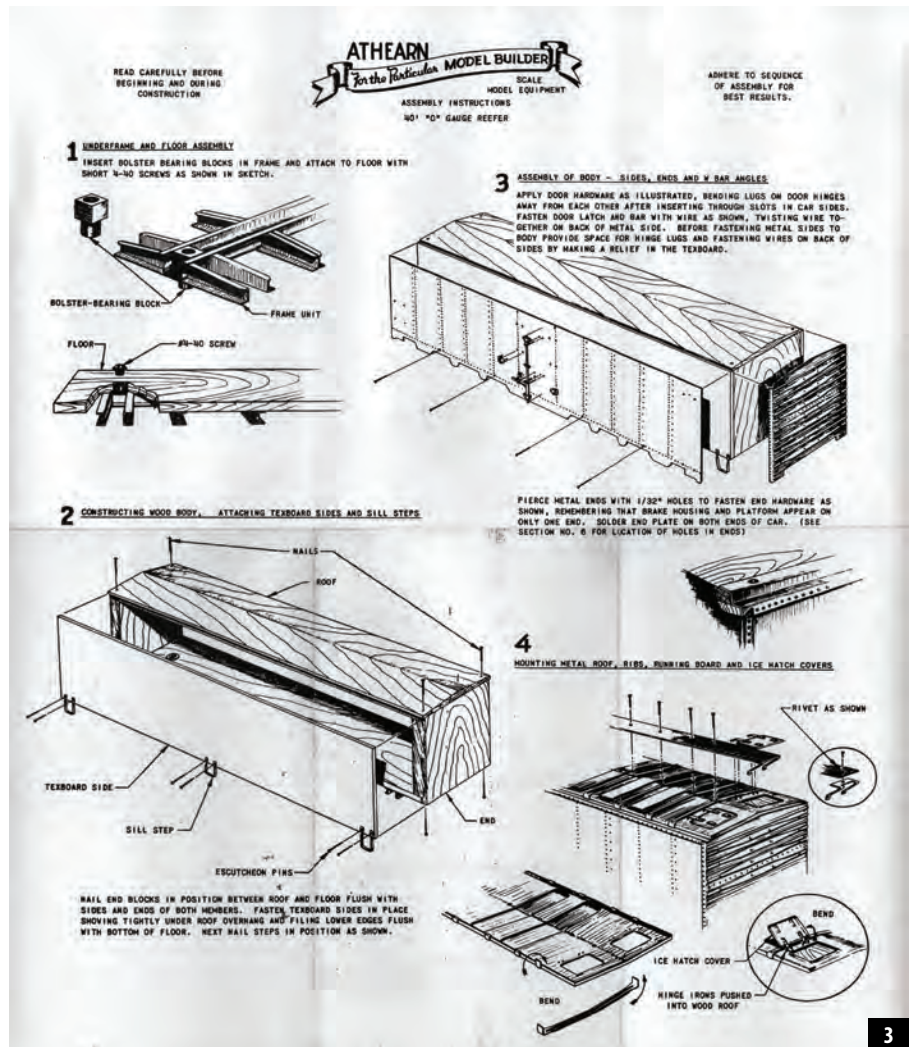
Some car kits required soldering metal components together. In my collection is a partially constructed Walthers 8,000-gallon tank car where the steel handrails, platforms, and frame components are soldered around the wooden dowel that models the tank. A high level of soldering knowledge and skill was crucial for successful construction of that car.

When building other freight car kits such as wooden cabooses, the windows and doors had to be precisely laid out on and skillfully cut from scribed sheets of wood, typically bass wood that was trimmed to overall size, but that's all.

Regardless of the type of O scale freight or passenger car kit, every step in its construction necessitated high levels of woodworking, painting, and even soldering craftsmanship plus the dedication and patience to produce an attractive model. Was each car on the O gauge railroader's roster of rolling stock worth this kind of time and effort? Well, that depends on your point of view. 

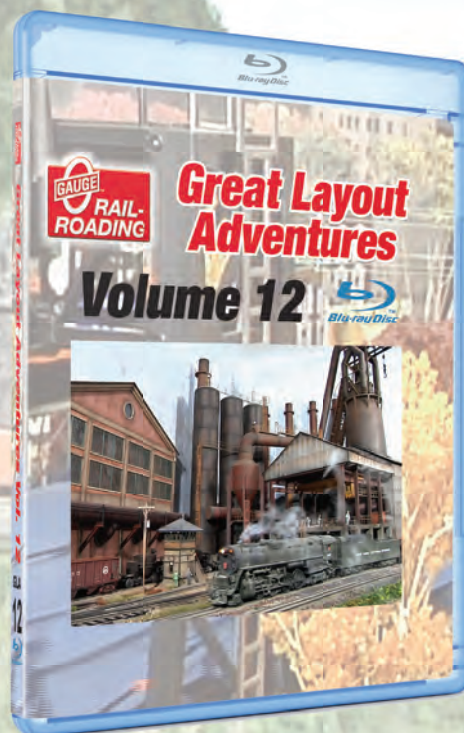
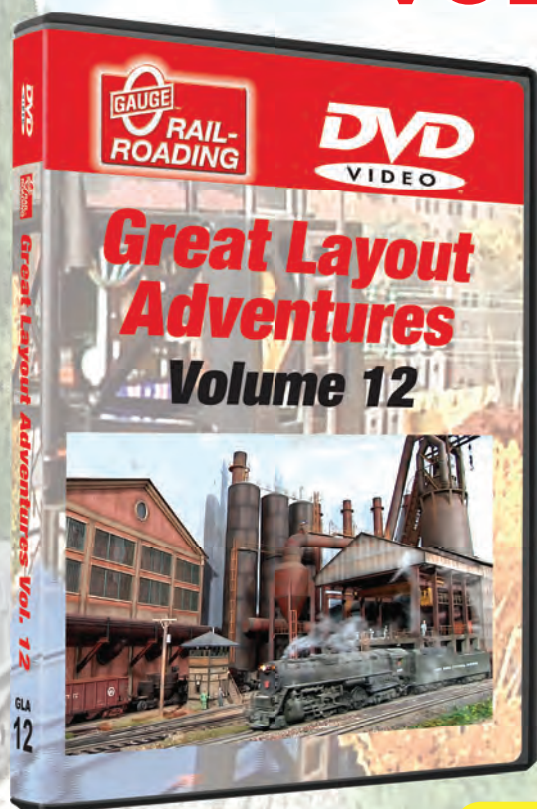


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October 2, 2016

FARMINGVILLE, NY – Central Operating Lines Model RR Club All Gauge Swap Meet, Island Bingo Hall, 1056 Portion Rd. 8:30a-1:30 p. Info: 631-563-1073.

October 8, 2016

RINGGOLD, GA – TCA Dixie Division Toy Train Meet, The Catoosa Colonnade, Old Mill Rd. Members 9a-1p, public 9:30a-1p, Adm: \$7. Info: Bill Stitt 423-894-1284.

October 9, 2016

ALTOONA, PA – Alto Model Train Museum Assoc. Model Train Swap Meet, Blair County Convention Center, 1 Convention Center Blvd. 9a-2p. Adm: \$5, under 12 free. Over 150 tables of toy trains and parts. Largest train show between Pittsburgh and York. Info: Ron Kennedy, 814-696-9671, ronjane@atlanticbb.net.

HAWLEY, PA – Hawley Fire Dept. Model Train Show & Sale, 17 Columbus Ave. 9a-3p, Adm: \$3, under 12 free w/adult. Info: Bill Delling, 618 Fern St., Hawley, PA 18428, 570-226-3206.

October 15-16, 2016

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WALLINGFORD, CT – Classic Shows Train & Toy Show, Zandri's Stillwood Inn, 1074 S. Colony Rd, exit 13 on I-91. Adm: \$6, 12 and under free w/adult. Info: 203-926-1327, www.ClassicshowsLLC.com.

November 11-12, 2016

TUCSON, AZ – Toy Train Show, Expo Center, 3750 E. Irvington Rd. Fri. 1p-6p, Sat. 9a-2p., Adm: \$6, 13 and under free. Info: Dave Hoverstock, 520-909-0722, Gadsden Pacific Toy Train Operating Museum, TrainShow@gpdtoytainmuseum.com, www.gpdtoytainmuseum.com.

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End of Track

by A. Clive Ellis

The CTC is down.
Use hand throws
to track 10.



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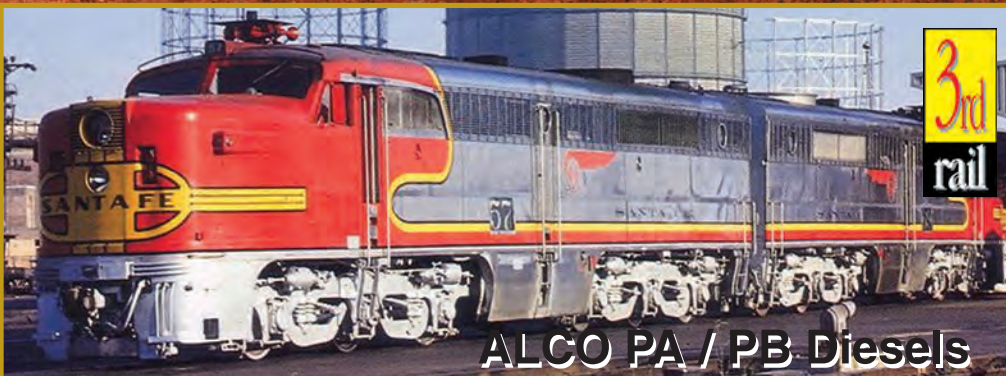
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