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70 Observations – Joe Giannovario
The Chemung Northern is a working railroad built to a scale ratio of 1/48, better known as O Scale. The railroad has been built around the walls of a 22' x 34' basement. The basement area has been finished and heated, a real benefit on cool New England evenings.

Construction began some 40 years ago, when we moved from New York State to our present home. The railroad is built on a basic grid-style framework of 1x4 pine, topped with a sub-roadbed of 5/8” plywood and 1/2” Homosote. Finished cabinet-work made of 1x6 V-groove pine supports the grid construction, providing a rigid frame for storage shelving and the forced hot water heating system.

Above the railroad surface, a lighting valence has been installed using some of the same 1x6 V-groove pine to provide visual continuity. Behind the lighting valence, three separate circuits, each with different colored lamps, provide 24-hour lighting effects. The lamps are, 40- and 60-watt clear for daylight, 40-watt amber for sunrise/sunset, and 25-watt blue for moonlight. The lighting circuits are manually dimmer-controlled; adding DCC-controlled motors to drive the dimmers is a future project.

The basement is divided into two sections by the stairway in the middle. One section is home to a staging area and large modeling bench. The other section contains a lounge, video library, utility room, a small antique corner, and a milk car and associated memorabilia collection.

The Chemung Northern, itself, represents an area of the Southern Tier of New York State. It is a hypothetical railroad, one that could have existed but never did. The concept of the railroad was developed after living and working in the vicinity for several years. The concept is simple, being point-to-point from an interchange at Cayuta, NY, to the railroad’s terminus at Chemung, NY. The towns on the railroad are named for locations in the actual area modeled. Because of varied modeling interests, I have found it difficult to stick with just one era and locale. The late 1940s was initially chosen for the era of the Chemung Northern. For a successful shortline, the era offered a combination of hand-me-down steam and first generation Diesel power. However, after living for four years next to the Erie-Lackawanna mainline in the 1960s, I could not avoid the desire to build examples of what was passing by the house. The compromise has been to operate the railroad in two separate eras, and storing away whatever is inappropriate.
As our four children began to move away from home after college, some additional space became available for railroad expansion. My wife first requested that the original laundry area be moved upstairs to a former bedroom. In its place, a coal-mine appeared (Photo 1). Then, with the lounge area no longer much of a family game area, the original mainline (which ran inside the top of surrounding bookcases) was exposed and the area expanded by cantilevering outwards from the narrow bookcases. This provided space for a small paper mill, a creamery, and a couple of support structures (Photos 2 & 3).

The final expansion came when the computer left its alcove under the stairs and that area became a seaport (Photo 4). Now I could have easily modeled a typical lake port so prevalent in the Finger Lakes region, and that would have fit the theme of the railroad. But, I grew up on the Massachusetts coast, and had always been fascinated by rails that came down onto the fish pier, so that’s what we now have. Today, as I look into the windows framed by cabinets and valence, I see mostly New York State, but there is also a special view that lets me see all the way to the Atlantic Ocean.

The railroad itself has hand-laid and detailed trackwork, primarily using codes 148 and 125 rail. Some switches are electrically controlled, while others that are within reach are controlled manually. Power was originally provided by variable-voltage DC transformers. Today, after several iterations, the railroad uses digital command control (DCC). When first built there was a number of operating semaphores in place, moved by heated nichrome wire. They provided interesting vignettes but, with the change to DCC, it was realized that additional signals would be needed. The change was made to searchlight-style signals with their lower power requirements. Since some of the mainline is single-track and out of sight, working signals are a must with DCC due to the fact that two independent locomotives can be on the same track operating in opposite directions (Photo 5). Most mainline trackage is out of sight between towns or switching locations, reflecting the owner’s primary interest in switching.

The railroad begins with the interchange at Cayuta. This is the location of a staging yard that represents the world outside the CN. The staging yard consists of five tracks, mounted on a large swivel sector-plate (Photo 6). The sector plate is eight feet long and is built above my workbench. The five tracks on the plate can be moved to align with either of two wye-tracks at Cayuta Junction, as necessary. This arrangement offers quite a bit of flexibility in preparing and removing trains during operating sessions. Cabinets provide additional rolling stock storage, serving to limit
that which is on the railroad at any given time. There is also a smaller sector-plate on the outboard end, allowing locomotives to escape to be turned for the next trip.

Cayuta is the first town encountered, when entering the railroad from the interchange. It is home to a coal and lumber dealer, a small chemical plant, team track, and a barrel factory or cooperage (Photo 7). The PRR Elmira Branch also appears behind the Cayuta depot. Heading east, the next location reached is the Tioga Falls paper mill. The operation here is large enough to warrant two company-owned 44-tonners to be on hand (Photo 8). The location of Alpine, and its creamery, are at the end of the long passing siding. Leaving Alpine, we pass two branch junctions, one to Keuka Mine and the other to the seaport town of Truro (Photo 9). Both of these locations have their own assigned switching power. Keuka Mine has both empty and loading tracks for eight to ten hoppers. A leased road engine is usually on hand, to help the coal drags up the grade to the interchange.

Truro is assigned CN #8, which sorts out cars at the pier and also brings reefers down to the junction at Big Flats (Photo 10). Big Flats hosts a passing siding and several industrial spurs. The industries include a cement plant, a feed mill, a shoe factory, gravel pit and a couple of distributors (Photo 11). Chemung follows Big Flats, and is the end of the CN line. In addition to a shop and engine facility, there is a woolen mill, tannery, box factory, machine rebuilder, feed mill, grape products company and a farm supply distributor (Photo 12).

Train crews sign in on a white board, and trains are operated in sequence following audible and visual rules. Switchlists are
provided on small clipboards for each train. The clipboards are hung on hooks provided under the lighting valence to keep them from being placed on the scenic’d railroad surface. During operations, the uncoupling of cars is performed either by magnet or some type of wand.

Most structures are scratchbuilt and freelanced, with the exception of the three depots. They are models of favorite prototypes located at Hammondsport, NY, Big Flats, NY, and Walpole, MA. The Chemung enginehouse is patterned after one that used to be in Claremont, NH. Structures are all lighted, bringing the railroad alive during night operations.

All locomotives are equipped with sound decoders. There are also several strategically placed stationary sound modules, producing appropriate sounds such as a waterfall, shop noise, flange squeal, and harbor background noise. Most of the rolling stock and locomotive fleet are either kit-built, scratchbuilt, or modified from the original, a modeling task I really enjoy. I am especially pleased with my unusual milk car display, which required much of the artwork to be created along with the car bodies.

We plan to be part of the layout tours during the 2008 O Scale Convention. My wife’s garden railroad will also be hosting an open house. We look forward to meeting old and new friends alike during that time.
Scace’s Laws

Many of you have asked about Scace’s Laws of O Scale, since they have been mentioned from time to time in this column. Well, here they are, in one handy package for your amusement.

1. Scratchbuild it. They will then produce it.
2. Never lay more track than you are willing to clean.
3. The hidden turnout breaks first.
   (Eschbach’s Corollary) The most invisible/inaccessible gap is the one that closed.
4. The quality of the tool is inversely proportional to the quantity of the blood.

Finally, there’s Scace’s Theory of Relativity. Your relatives will call it a “train set”.

All Good Things…

OST #36 marks the beginnings of a transition, hopefully a healthy one. After five years with OST (four years of which has been editing) I’m sliding out of the Editor’s chair, and Mike Cougill is slipping in. It’s been a wonderful ride, but it’s also time for a new thumbprint to be placed. While I’ll always have a historian’s perspective, Mike brings an artist’s touch. Mike is also a relative newcomer to the scale, so he brings a newcomer’s perspective and enthusiasm. It’s a healthy thing, and I can’t help but feel strongly that, occasionally, a new perspective is needed to keep OST fresh.

Now, before the rumors start (I know you guys!), you’ll be disappointed to know there is no juicy gossip behind this. I know it’ll be tough for you not to have some learned explanation that you’re privy to (but nobody else), but be strong. I’m just ready for something else, the magazine is ready for someone else, and my boy is no longer a toddler. He and I have big plans.

Joe, Jaini, and Jeb have been wonderful to work with, and will always be special friends. All the columnists, past and present, represent a wide variety of backgrounds and opinions (some strongly held!), and all have kept me on my toes and made me appreciate the wide spectrum of pursuits available in our O Scale World, much wider than I would have otherwise appreciated. We have a great team of authors, here. My only wish is that more of you will join the ranks of these talented folks. OST depends on its authors, without whom there really would be no exchange of ideas, methods, technique. There’d be no magazine “celebrating the art of O Scale modeling”.

You, the reader, have been wonderful to work for. I’ve enjoyed all the repartee (whether we’ve agreed or not), whether by mail, email, or face-to-face at the various meets. I’ve also been amazed at how much I did not know, even after some 40 years as an O Scaler. I’ll always appreciate the kind words and, yes, the candor of the last four years. Without that candor, we’d never know what you think (agreeable or not) and the magazine would never have grown to what it is. Stay vocal, and keep Mike honest!

Joe will be going back to his original role of Editor-in-Chief/Publisher with this issue, and Mike will be taking my place on the masthead in short order. Please send whatever correspondence you’d be sending “to the Editor” to Joe, while Mike is getting used to his new responsibilities. Mike and I did this issue together, to make sure the transition is as seamless as possible. Starting with #37, Mike will be in the driver’s seat. Once he’s firmly in the saddle, I’ll be ducking out and joining the rest of you as another subscriber and perhaps an occasional article author. It’s been an honor to be a part of this.

Meanwhile, the Boy awaits! Let’s go Exploring!
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#9001 EMD F9, 36” fans, 48” dynamic brake, 2 portholes, Farr (vert) grilles

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#8002 EMD F7-Ph1 late, F7-Ph2, 36” low fans, 48” dynamic brake, 2 portholes, Farr (vert) grilles
#9002 EMD F9, 36” fans, 48” dynamic brake, 2 portholes, Farr (vert) grilles

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#8000 EMD F7-Ph1 late, F7-Ph2, 36” low fans, 48” dynamic brake, 2 portholes, Farr (vert) grilles
#9000 EMD F9, 36” fans, 48” dynamic brake, 2 portholes, Farr (vert) grilles

F Unit “B” Body KITS: reg. $94.99, on sale $79.99
#3000 EMD F3-Ph3, F7-Ph1, 36” low fans, 36” dynamic brake, 3 portholes, horiz grilles
#4000 EMD F7-Ph1 (late), F7-Ph2, F9, 36” low fans, 48” dynamic brake, 2 portholes, Farr (vert) grilles

All kits include brass etched grills, appropriate detailed parts, and preformed grab irons for indicated model. These kits include only the parts above the frame.
At the end of Part 1, I had stopped with the first floor basically completed, minus the doors and windows (to be installed close to completion). All of the interior details for the first floor were installed and the adjacent storage shed was finished up to the actual sheathing of the roof.

Before we continue, let’s define the compass again. You can refer back to Part 1, or just remember that the wall with the front entrance porch is “South”. The opposite deck-side wall is “North”. The storage shed is on the “West” wall, and the outside stairway to the second floor is on the “East” side. Whoops! We haven’t started to build the outside stairway, yet. So, with that being said, here’s how I built the second floor and interior, the various roof components, and finished building Clugston’s Store.

Building the Second Floor

I started building the second story of the main building by installing the perimeter sills, 1/16” x 3/16” dimensional lumber, that rest directly on top of the 2x4 caps of the first floor walls flush with the outside edge (Photo 1). The sills made from the two merged Gould Company #1007 stairway sets. I used some scrap 1/16” x 3/16” dimensional lumber and a full joist length of the same material, boxing in the steps and creating a landing at the top of the steps. Almost all of the rest of the floor joists were added, again using 1/16” x 3/16” dimensional lumber, on two-foot centers with the exception of a square gap left in the middle of the floor. I framed in a lift-out area of joists for access to the lighting and for access to the first floor.

A finished and accessible interior needs some lighting. I had the lighting units from the Berkshire Valley “Country Store” detail set in hand, so these were installed. I glued (with Walthers Goo) the bulb holders to some 1/32” scrap spanning three joists from underneath, soldered up the wire, and ran the leads through the floor joists over to the shed. I then dropped the leads down through the shed for eventual hook-up to power. The lift-out joist box was used, both for this installation and to put the bulbs in place (after a quick test to prove that I could get my fingers through, around, and up, to put bulbs in).

The Second-Floor Flooring

The flooring was made from 1/32” thick, 3/32” scribed siding from Northeastern Scale Lumber. The perimeter of the floor, say six or eight scale feet in from the edge, was glued (CA) into place in sections, including “wrapping” it around the stairwell (Photo 2). The remaining center section was assembled by edge-gluing together two large pieces of scribed siding. This entire section was planned as a removable lift-out, populated with the second-floor interior walls and furniture. These same features were planned to provide a “handle” for lifting this section out for access to the first floor.

Building the Second-Floor Exterior Walls

I modified my approach used for building the first-floor walls, and stopped at the framing stage with the interior “plaster” walls painted (Polly S Aged White) and glued down flush to the perimeter without adding the exterior clapboards.

All four of these pre-assembled stud-walls were assembled with nine-foot 2x4 studs on two-foot centers with a 4x4 on each end (Figure 1, page 17 and Photo 3). The 2x4 studs below the windows were doubled for support, and headers over the windows were included in all walls as needed.

Having committed to an interior on the second floor forced me to include some sort of access to the attic. The North wall unit then expanded to include the interior wall for the second-floor stairwell interior wall coming up from the first floor, and also incorporated the stairway space directly over that going up to the attic. I first built the exterior wall and framed it for two Grandt Line #3702 windows, “plastered” the interior with 0.005” styrene, cut out the window holes, trimmed out the windows with O Scale 1x4, and painted the trim and the walls as described for the first floor. Then, I built an interior wall using the same construction style, except it was sheathed with styrene on both sides, and connected it to the exterior wall with similarly sheathed framing for a Grandt Line #3602 door up to the attic. I also installed a spliced together and cut-to-fit Grandt Line stairway over a sheet of 0.005” styrene, closing off this area from the lower stairwell. The wainscoting theme (3.5’ high using Kappler 1/16” clapboards).
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scribed x 1/32” thick siding capped off with an HO 1x4) was carried over from the first floor into this space, through the stairwell space, and around into this interior hallway area (Photo 4).

The second-story South wall was built up similarly to the first-floor wall, and was framed for a Grandt Line #3601 door in the center and four Grandt #3702 windows equally spaced. The second-story West wall was similar in dimensions to the first-floor wall, and was framed for front room and bathroom Grandt #3702 windows. Some additional 4x4 framing was run out from this wall to intersect with the planned interior walls. I had planned a kitchen window, but that ended up interfering with the chimney (well, the stove has to exhaust somewhere...). The second-story East wall was framed for three Grandt #3702 windows for the front room, dining room, and bedroom, and again some 4x4 for intersecting interior walls. This wall was also framed out to accommodate a second story side entrance. I’ll come back to building that access later (Photo 5). Once all of the interior window trimming and painting was completed, the North wall unit was CA’d in place first. Then, the remaining second-floor walls followed with all of the ends being glued together as well (Photo 6).

The exteriors of the second-story walls were finished in individual clapboards just like the first floor walls (Photo 7). An HO 2x8 kick-out board was glued at the base of the South wall, due to the installation of the joists for the porch. I also doubled the exterior of the sidesill where the second-story side entrance platform would be attached. Clapboards, of HO 1” x 16” lumber no more than 12’ long, with staggered joints were used to finish these walls. Window openings were cut out and test fitted with their respective Grandt Line castings.

Building the Second-Floor Interior Walls

Again, before building any interior walls, I assembled all of the furniture I had collected together (Berkshire Valley, Karen Cary’s Miniatures, Builders in Scale, BTS, and other “stuff”) and laid out floor-plans that would accept it all on a piece of foam backer-board. I did remember to take into account the space occupied by the stairways and the landing areas in the back of the building. I laid out a bedroom, dining room, bathroom, small office/study, a kitchen, and a meeting room. I decided that, with Clugston owning and operating a sizeable store, he should also be a man of some means and influence within the community, thereby entitled to a meeting or “great” room where town meetings and such might be held.

The interior walls were constructed on O Scale 4x4 frames and sheathed with 0.010” styrene. These were initially set up as two independent sub-structures, East and West, to form a central hallway running from the back stairway with access to the great room in the front. The walls were painted Polly S Aged White. After the doorways (Grandt #3602) were cut out, the baseboard and door trim (O Scale 1x6 and 1x4 respectively) was painted Polly S Light Green and installed. The West sub-structure contains the bathroom, a small office/study, and the kitchen, while the East sub-structure contains the bedroom and dining room. The ends of the walls fit snugly adjacent to the O Scale 4x4 framing members that I had left exposed in the exterior wall framing, but the interior walls were not attached to the exterior walls. Both sub-structure interior walls were secured to the central lift-out portion of the floor, along with the room contents. The furniture and details not on the lift-out were secured to the perimeter flooring or to the exterior walls (Photo 8).

The Second-Story Porch

The porch floor was then installed using Northeastern (1/32” thick x 3/32” scribed) siding. Railing posts (Grandt #3537) were spaced above the support posts from the first-floor porch. Grandt #3505 railing was cut down or glued up, as needed, to fill the gaps between the posts. After the railing and post assembly was completed, it was painted with Polly S Aged White. After the decking had been stained, the railing unit was secured with CA (Photo 9). I took a Grandt #3810 screen door, expanded it with some scrap styrene to fit the doorframe, then added some brass screening to the back. After painting it Aged White, I secured the door in place with...
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by building the platform out of the now familiar 1/16" x 3/16" dimensional lumber deck over with the same Northeastern 1/32" thick, 3/32" scribed, siding. The support legs were made from some O Scale 7" x whatever pine-stock from Kappler, with HO 3" x 12" cross-braces, all fitted out with Grandt #23 nut-bolt-washer castings. The stairway was the result of mingling my remaining Grandt and Gould stairway castings, the result of which I gave a little twist to make it a bit more rickety. The footing was made from some foundation stones; the "twist" was accommodated with some leftover chimney bricks. The railing around the deck was made from HO 8x8 for posts, with more HO 3" x 12" lumber for the railing topped with some HO 3" x 18" stock (Photo 11). I added another Grandt #3810 screen door, expanded with some scrap styrene to fit. Again, some brass screening was added behind, and the whole was painted Aged White, before attaching the assembly to the frame. The last thing I added was Mrs. Clugston and her cat (both from Arttista) checking out the commotion over those new washing machines on the loading dock and wondering which one was hers.

**Finishing the Shed and the Shed Roof**

The shed roof had been gap-sheathed with HO 1" x 24" planking in preparation for a metal roof. The East end of the shed, going up the exterior of the rafter area, was first closed in with additional individual HO 1" x 14" clapboards. The roofing was done with Builders in Scale metal ribbed-seam roofing material. The roofing material was pre-cut to four foot widths prior to gluing it down. The shed roof was done in two courses on each side, using eight-foot long sheets secured with Goo. This process worked nicely to hold this material down, working left-to-right starting from the bottom corner of the roof. Make sure the seams cleanly overlap, leaving a small overhang. The flashing to the exterior East wall of the main building was done using a small excess of the same roofing material, folded up and secured onto the framing prior to installation of the clapboard. The peak of the metal roof was sealed with sections of the standing rib, cut from scrap roofing sections, along with a small portion of the roofing. These pieces were very carefully hand-formed to conform to the standing seams of the roofing, then secured with Goo.

**Trim Boards**

All of the corners of the building's clapboard sheathing were trimmed out with O Scale 1x6. The trim boards were added after the walls were assembled, the shed and porch roof framing completed, and all of the clapboard had been installed. I also built up some trim for the exposed sills for the second-floor porch using some quarter-round and some other wooden "special shapes" out of my scrap box.

**The Main Roof**

The rafters, made of 1/16" x 3/16" dimensional lumber (Figure 2, page 17 and Photo 12), were all built in place and test-fitted into their specific locations to insure a proper fit. Then, I assembled the entire roof in place on the building,
onto these scraps to hold the entire assembly down and to stabilize the shape. The entire roof was gap-sheathed with HO 2" x 20" material, leaving a gap for the chimney to pass through on the West side. The North and South ends of the main roof were closed in with board-and-batten made from individual HO 1" x 24" and 1" x 3" boards (Photo 13).

Concurrent with building rafters, sheathing the roof, and then putting on the metal roof, the chimney (Photo 14) was extended up the side of the second story to the base of the soffit board running between the rafters. I made a break in the actual chimney, then glued the portion of the chimney (from the soffit board up) to the soffit itself. This method made the roof removable without breaking the flashing seal around the chimney and the metal roofing. See Part I for more details on how I made the chimney partly removable with the roof.

Roofing
The roofing for the main building was done with more Builders in Scale metal ribbed-seam roofing material, precut to four-foot widths. The roof was done in two courses of 12' roofing and one course of eight-foot long sheets on each side, carefully fitted around the chimney. Again, I used Goo to secure this roofing material, working right-to-left starting from the bottom corner of the roof leaving a small overhang. The peak of the roof was sealed over using sections of just the standing rib cut from scrap roofing sections. These pieces were carefully formed by hand to conform to the standing seams of the roofing and secured with Goo.

All of the metal roofing was painted with two coats of a one-to-one mixture of Polly S Mineral Red and Special Tan, to simulate an older red-oxide painted roof that has been oxidized and faded by the sun. The characteristic brown staining of old rust breaking through was added, using three applications of Minwax stain mixture that was "dropped" into seams with a small brush and allowed to wander about on the roof. After drying, these areas were drybrushed with Polly S Roof Brown and Rust. All of the joints, such as where the shed roof butts up against the building, around the chimney, or where the boiler house roof meets the exterior wall, were also sealed with "tar" using Polly S Steam Black. The entire roofing array was then airbrushed with an overspray of dilute Floquil Grumpy Black to seal this effect. The entire interior framing of the roof was also stained with Pecan Minwax.

Painting & Finishing
All of the exposed wood, the baseboard and stone foundation were stained with my Minwax mystery mix (I still don’t know what’s in it.) After this dried, all of the weather-exposed siding of the building was hand-painted with an undercoat of Floquil Wisconsin Central Gold. This undercoating was done very quickly and unevenly, with a fairly large stiff brush, to work it into the clapboards. While this might sound sloppily done, care is required to ensure that the color doesn’t get on anything else. Then, all of the exterior sheathing was given a top-coating of a one-to-one mixture of Polly S Mineral Red and French Earth Brown. Those portions given the Floquil undercoat were top-coated after no more than an hour (and most likely much sooner than that) after application of the undercoat. This causes all of the Polly S painted surfaces with the tacky Floquil paint undercoat to actually glaze and crack, giving the appearance of peeling paint of one color revealing the prior color underneath, while the more "sheltered from weather" surfaces retain a more evenly painted surface. By the way, while Wisconsin Central Gold may seem very bright, after this technique was completed it took on a more cream color. This paint is also completely unlike any other Floquil paint that I have used. It was very thick and appeared to have gloss added, as well.

Some of the final details to be added were the signs for Clugston's Store, on the second-floor porch railing, and the collection of advertising signs on the East and North walls. I made the front signs ("Clugston's" and "Post Office") using a laser-printer. The paper was trimmed, glued to some 1/32" sheet basswood, and framed with some Northeastern 1/32" wooden angle. Afterwards, the signs were stained with Minwax and painted in the same scheme as the rest of the exterior. The two signs were strung together using 2mm stanchions (from Precision Scale) and some 0.019" brass wire. They were then hung from the front of the second-floor porch with another pair of stanchions. The advertising signs for the exterior were first printed in a variety of sizes, using an ink-jet printer, so I could pick the ones that fit the areas best. The selected signs were then thinned with some 220-grit sandpaper, positioned onto the clapboard, and pre-creased to fit the contours of the wall. They were then soaked in water to soften the paper fiber, as well as to let the ink leach out to fade and
age the signs. The backs of the signs were sprayed with a thin application of 3M Spray Mount Artist’s Adhesive and pressed into place.

The smoke jack for the pot-belly stove on the first floor is a Turner Model Works casting. I managed to locate the stove piping from the inside to align the smoke jack, and cut a round hole in the clapboards. I made a bracket to support the casting, connected that to two brass anchors that I mounted to the wall with some 0.010” wire, slipped a small washer over the end as a gasket, and mounted the casting in place. Some painting with various blacks, browns, and rust, followed by some Bragdon rust powders, finished the smoke jack.

**Window and Doors**

All of the doors and windows were pre-painted with two coats of Polly S Aged White, glazed with polyacetate, and inserted after the building was painted. Some light dry-brushing with the Aged White, to simulate streaks from water running off of the windows, was added after the exterior building painting was completed.

To finish this building off, I dusted it with a lot of my own ground-up pastel chalks and also played a bit with some of the Bragdon powders. I then lightly over-sprayed the whole building, using an airbrush, with Floquil Grimy Black. I added a heavier pattern on and around the chimney. The West wall and roof adjacent to the chimney were heavily blackened, to complete the exterior. Some final touches were to cap the chimney with some crows from Arttista.

Then, I just had to load up the back deck with a selection of barrels, crates, and assorted debris. I had just gotten a jib-crane casting from Model Tech Studios, so I decided to add that, as well. I modified the mounting mechanism with strip styrene and a bunch of Grandt #23 nut-bolt-washer castings, used some Evergreen channel to mount it to the wall with more “nbw’s”, some surgical silk for a cable, and a hook from Precision Scale. I tossed the wire supplied for making the cranks into the scrap box, and soldered my own up from some brass bar-stock. I even added some more foundation stones under the porch to support the base of the crane. Just when I thought I had this detail finished and swiveling nicely I realized that, if it ever had ever carried any weight, it would come right off the wall. So, more channel stock with nbw’s pre-painted Aged White just had to go on the inside of the stairwell walls to support this crane. So much for planning ahead, and thank goodness for long thin tweezers. Well, with all this stuff on the back deck, I had to keep adding more people and a dog from Arttista, and those new washing machines that just got delivered.

So, that just about wraps up how I built Clugston’s Store. All I have to do now is to install this new building into my layout, and add the scenery and surrounding details, before moving on to my next building project.

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**Figure 1: Framing plans for the East, West, North and South 2nd floor walls.**

**Figure 2: Pattern for the Roof Rafters**
Keeping Track

With the New Year upon us, some of you might be first time readers of O Scale Trains. Maybe you’ve thought of moving from another scale or converting from 3-rail to 2-rail. Perhaps you’re switching from standard O Scale (1-1/4” gauge) to P48. Regardless of where you’ve come from, let me extend a warm welcome to you.

If you enjoy prototype fidelity and accurate modeling, then P48 will be a comfortable home for you. You might have the impression that P48 modeling is all about scratchbuilding everything, locomotives, cars, etc. Nothing could be further from the truth. While many P48 modelers are accomplished scratchbuilders, we also convert many cars from the worlds of Hi-Rail and Standard O that are dimensionally accurate. With a simple change of trucks or replacement wheelsets, they make great looking models. We’ll often sweeten up the detailing a bit too, such as adding separate grab irons, ladders, or new couplers, to further refine the car’s appearance. You can have a satisfying P48 layout using off-the-shelf components.

However, there are always new skills to master in model railroading. One such skill is handlaying track. I don’t know why so many find this process intimidating. I can assure you it isn’t as frightening as it seems. Once you dive in and get your feet wet, you’ll wonder why you waited so long to try it.

I do agree that well detailed P48 trackwork can make one think twice about trying it. All that detailing can be scary. And spiking each and every tie? Here’s the secret. Break the task down into small manageable pieces. If you’ve never handlaid a piece of track in your life, start with a short section of display track. The investment in time and materials will be minor but the knowledge gained will pay huge rewards.

I’ve handlaid track in different scales, but had never worked with individual tieplates. I knew there’d be a learning curve and the test section helped. Spiking the rails every third or fourth tie, as you normally do, makes it hard to slip the adjacent tieplates in place. I found that, with a nice heavy track gauge to hold the rails steady, you can place several tieplates under a length of rail before spiking them down. By placing several tieplates at a time, you can put in enough spikes to hold the rails in place. Then go back and slide in the missing tieplates, align the rails, and spike every tie you wish.

A visitor once observed that I didn’t pre-paint the gray plastic tieplates before installation. I said that I merely painted the rail sides and the tieplates in one pass. With the right size brush, it’s fairly simple to keep the paint off the ties. Like so many things, all it takes is a little practice.

If you’re serious about working in P48, then handlaying track is a skill worth cultivating since there are no ready-to-run commercial P48 track components at present. House of Duddy used to offer P48 flextrack in a variety of rail sizes, but I believe it has been dropped from their line. For turnouts, they’re definitely a handlaid project. Thanks to companies like American Switch and Signal (1945 N. Highway 300 West Winamac, IN 46996), the hard work is done for you. Their frog, point, and guardrail castings are just superb. Right-O’-Way Products (23682 Road 15-3/4 Chowchilla, CA 93610) carries an amazing variety of tieplates, joint bars, and other track components. Be aware that R-O-W’s turnout and crossing parts are for Standard O, not P48.

Like so many aspects of the hobby, learning a new skill like laying track takes time. It involves making some mistakes, learning from them and trying again. I encourage you, whatever your level of skill, to give something new a try in 2008. I’ll be practicing what I preach as I move to the Editor’s chair to succeed Brian. Best wishes and good luck, Brian. Your influence on these pages will be sorely missed.

Best regards.

Mike
Overhead bridge cranes were located at various places including the team track, engine house, large industries and the freight house. It was used to move heavy loads from flats and gons. The crane is a brass import. The hoist trolley is positionable on the bridge. The model is painted and ready for you to simply hang the hook and chain on the hoist. Approx. Size - scale 20’ wide with 16’ clearance from ground to the bottom of the bridge. This is a limited run project that is sold direct only from B.T.S.
Inspiration Is Where You Find It!

Inspiration for new models can come from anywhere, including books you may have owned for decades, as well as rolling stock you encounter while visiting trolley museums. I’d like to share the story behind three of my recent acquisitions that illustrate the value of one-of-a-kind models.

**Piedmont and Northern #5600**

For close to 20 years, I’ve enjoyed my copy of *Piedmont and Northern: The Great Electric System of the South*, written by Thomas T. Fetters and Peter W. Swanson, Jr. The book was published by Golden West Books in 1974 for the then mighty sum of $19.95, and has long been a favorite of mine. (Note: a limited number of used copies are available from [www.alibris.com](http://www.alibris.com) starting at $100, a fair price for the value you’ll receive for the book.)

The Piedmont and Northern was a 128-mile electric railroad built to steam railroad standards with lots of private right-of-way. There were two separate divisions, one in North Carolina and the other in South Carolina. The two lines were separated by a gap of 51 miles. The Piedmont and Northern was characterized by multi-car passenger trains, numerous atmospheric terminals, high level platforms, and several observation cars.

During World War I, the line’s growing interchange freight traffic was severely taxing their existing freight engines. Needing an immediate solution, the line built four unique engines in their own shops by placing unused freight and express bodies on articulated platforms. Each chassis contained a pair of two-axle trucks. The resulting power was more than enough to handle 40-car freight trains.

Talking to Gene Deschenes about the line’s unique engines, he mentioned that he also found both the engines and the book fascinating. The result of that conversation is a large, powerful model that dwarfs other models in the same way the prototype engines dwarfed the line’s other rolling stock.

**Aroostook Valley #70**

Aroostook Valley combine #70 is an elegantly-lined car that currently resides at the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine [http://www.trolleymuseum.org](http://www.trolleymuseum.org). My favorite memories of it were when the museum used it for their Haunted Trolley rides each Halloween. Typically, these rides took place on the coldest nights of the year, but the hot cider made up for the temporary discomfort.

One of the reasons for its use at Halloween, of course, was the car’s dilapidated condition at the time. The car has recently been restored to “as-built” condition, and that’s the way Gene Deschenes modeled it.

**Montreal & Southern Counties #504**

Many years ago, Arthur Ford measured the Montreal & Southern Counties combine and coach, also on display at the Seashore Trolley Museum. It had always bugged me that, although my sons and I had often explored the matching freight motor in the Highland Barn at Kennebunk, I didn’t have a model of one to pair up with the matching combine and coach.

Again, Gene Deschenes to the rescue! The lines of #504 perfectly match the coach and combine when coupled together, as they often were. This three-car lash-up will make a perfect complement to my planned model of the Montreal & Southern County’s perfectly-proportioned Montreal terminal, described in one of my early “Traction Action” columns, *OST* 26 (May-Jun 2006).

**Conclusion**

So, what are your favorite prototypes? What photographs in books fascinate you, year after year? Which museum rolling stock brings back favorite memories? It’s never too late to model your favorite prototype! Having a one-of-a-kind model of your favorite prototype is a great way to keep your interest in traction modeling alive.
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R R I A L S  U N L I M I T E D
General

I saw a photo of this unique Soo Line door-and-a-half car in “Focus on Boxcars” at the 2007 Chicago O Scale meet. I was looking at a Rails Unlimited CB&Q outside-braced boxcar model, which has four more braces on the sides, and I asked Ted Schnepf if he thought this might work. He indicated that it might be close enough, if I reconfigured the side braces. The more I thought about it the more appealing the idea was, so I had Ted send me one (Photo 1).

The car is molded in a medium-soft urethane resin plastic, similar to several other car kits I have built in both HO and O Scales. I enjoy these kits since doing something different with the model is not difficult and the results are very pleasing. Modeling in O Scale is relatively new to me, but I am enjoying it. As I get older my hands shake more, and the larger models are easier for me to put together. Some of the kits available will work for the Soo Line that I love to model. This kit is an example of those possibilities.

I started my model by removing the unneeded cast-on braces with a chisel blade in an X-acto knife. I tried to be careful and not let it slip, but I am finding in my older years that careful isn’t what it used to be, if it ever was. I did nick the adjacent braces in a few places (Photo 2). Stuff happens!

After removing the bracing, I filed and sanded the areas flush with the wood siding. This operation does remove some of the very nice original wood-grain detail on the model (Photo 3). When
everything looked smooth and reasonably flat, I used a regular #11 blade in the knife to scribe new board lines into the urethane body using a rule as a guide (Photo 4). When the lines were cut, I reworked the wood grain by pulling a razor saw over the surface (Photo 5) until the wood grain details stood out again. Although the result was not equal to the original, it was acceptable to me.

The boards all looked alike. I pushed the flat end of a mill file over all of them to add variation in the grain patterns. You cannot really see the old bracing locations, but you can see a difference between my work and the original (professional) modeling work done on the car side. Except for my marring the adjacent bracing, the whole thing turned out nicely (Photo 6). I then replaced the bracing plate with 0.010” x 0.115” Evergreen styrene strips. I was not up to making the rivet details for the piece, and it really does not show all that much. Once this was CA’d in place, I glued a 0.060” x 0.060” square piece of styrene on top of it, using Plastruct solvent glue, to resemble the existing car fabrication. Again, close enough for my needs (Photo 7).

Brake Rigging

I have come to the conclusion that one can go on for hundreds of hours, adding every nut and bolt to one of these models. The brake rigging on a boxcar is only slightly noticeable on a moving model train, and if you are talking to visitors, no one asks if it has an underframe detailed like an imported brass model. I have modeled only a facsimile of the real thing, with the usual air reservoir, cylinder, brake valve, some piping, and air hoses on the end (Photo 8).

Car Body Details

There are no real instructions supplied with the Rails Unlimited kit, but there are some very nice photos showing some details that I copied for my model. I had only one photo of the Soo Line car I wanted to model, from the Guy N. Kieckhefer collection and appearing in the Fall 1994 issue of the Soo magazine (published by the Soo Line Historical & Technical Society). The page appears just above my model in the photos.

When I started drilling holes for the ladder rungs on the sides and ends of the car, I discovered that the car had a bolted-on ladder on the upper parts of the ends. I used a Chooch ladder, which is a close match to the prototype. The photo shows individual grab irons on the lower two rungs. The sides have individual rungs, so I made them of 0.019” wire. Nut-bolt-washer castings would improve the detail if one wanted to go to the time and effort of installing them (Photo 9). I made the stirrup steps from Detail Associates 0.015” x 0.040” flat brass stock. The brass steps hold up to handling better than plastic glue-on types. I drilled some holes in the sill, installed the stirrups with CA and, when it cured, I bent the steps out slightly as they appear in the photo. I could have just glued them onto the outside of the sill, but I wanted them to stay on the car. The brake wheel is from Precision Scale and I soldered it to a straight wire that is seated in a piece of flat brass stock at the bottom.

Roof Details

The roofwalk is made of Evergreen 0.020”x0.125” strip styrene. I used my razor saw to scribe in some wood grain before installing it on the car. I used some end walks from Chooch (they have some fantastic plastic detail parts for boxcars); I then installed some grabs using bent wire. I decided to not bother with the bolt and washer details, even though they would add a great deal to the end result. The doors are cast into the urethane carbody and the detailing is sufficient for me, so I left them as they were.

Trucks and Couplers

I found a pair of Athearn plastic Andrews trucks, perfect for this car even up to the 1960s when the cars were scrapped. These are nicely done and, with metal wheels from NWSL, they are perfect. Unfortunately, I have been unable to find any more. Apparently, they are on back-order according to several dealers. I am not really particular about the couplers or cut lever details, so I fabricated some cut levers from brass wire and made the hangers out of flat brass stock from Detail Associates. I use Kadee couplers on almost everything, and installed #805 on this model.

Painting, Decals, Finishing, and Weathering

I rarely prime a model when using Scalecoat paint. I painted the car with Scalecoat Oxide Red, which is very close to the original Soo Line color (Photo 10). A spray booth and airbrush are absolute necessities for this work.

Some of the decals are not difficult to come by. I used Champ N-74 with OD-2 data sets. The end numbers and lettering came from a leftover set of Mullet River caboose decals I had in my drawer. I am satisfied with the results, even if they are not a perfect match to the lettering in the photos. I am looking for something that gives the finished car a Soo identity, rather than a perfect model of a particular car.

With the decals applied, I weathered the car with Floquil paints by spraying an overcoat of a diluted oxide color. I wanted to get the weathering similar to that shown in the lead photo. I applied some rust colored chalk on the truck springs, couplers, draftgear boxes, and underframe edges. I used a charcoal stick to get the effect of the paint coming off the wood siding. The results are varying and subjective but, in time, a “that’s good enough” effect comes to the surface. When I was satisfied with the weathering, I sprayed on a protective coat of dull lacquer. The finished car is a magnificent model and it is “Soo” enough in character for me.
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Sticky Business

As a 3-Rail operator, my model railroading was pretty basic and straightforward. I started with some sectional track, a transformer, two wires with a lock-on, an engine, some cars, and I was ready to roll. As a Hi-Railer I learned to add details, scale scenery and realistic structures, but everything still had a basic simplicity (which, by the way, was not bad at that level of my interest). As my interest grew and my passion deepened, I got this bug for 2-Rail and off I went down the tracks like some hobo on an adventurous journey.

Those same basic concepts apply with glues and adhesives. For over 50 years of Hi-Rail modeling, I thought that the only glues I would ever need could be found in a tube of plastic model cement and a bottle of white glue. Boy, was I wrong. Venturing on my journey into 2-Rail, I soon learned that a lot of things are more complicated and sophisticated over here.

One of those elements is the glues and adhesives used in scale model railroading. While there are many kinds of glues available, each is designed for a particular purpose and each provides a unique bond. Now that’s not to say you couldn’t use some of them for other than their intended purpose, but the lesson initially is to follow directions and specifications. As every serious modeler has their list of favorite glues, this list is my own and is offered in the hope that it helps a fellow modeler on the same journey.

Plastic model cement is generally what you find in the orange and white tube at most retailers. Made by Testors, it is used for several purposes, including model airplane building and plastic construction with styrene. It is okay for building plastic kits, but has a long curing time.

The next step up that I began using is Testors Model Master Professional Model Cement. It comes in a triangular black plastic applicator with a long pointed metal tip. This is great for applying just a drop or two. It dries relatively fast and it is easy to use. Styrene seems to love this stuff. Now, I use it all of the time with kit building and projects. Just remember not to inhale the fumes.

Getting back to white glue, Elmer’s has been around since my grade school days. It works on the model railroad for a variety of purposes. Diluting it down to a 50/50 mix with water and adding a drop of dish detergent certainly works for bonding track ballast. It, too, has a slow drying time but is great for general purposes.

Stepping up from white glue is yellow or brown Carpenter’s Wood Glue. Elmer’s makes Probond that works pretty well. Another brand is Titebond. These glues are much thicker, but adhere very well to most surfaces. They set up faster than the white glue. I have found them great for laying track underlayment, Styrofoam, and roadbed. They also work great for most wood structure kits because they can be applied with a toothpick and will stay in place.

I have learned to appreciate some specialty glues. Ross makes white glue called Weldbond. This is great glue for attaching signs and lettering to buildings. It has great adhesion and strength and can be applied in very thin coats. Also, it has a fast drying time, which is great if you are working with signs. It dries clear, a positive characteristic.

Aleene’s Tacky Glue really surprised me. A modeling friend suggested that I try this glue. I had seen it at my local arts-and-crafts store but never seriously considered using it. Did I learn something? Yes. This stuff is great because it is thick, goes on easy, and becomes tacky very quickly. That is great for assembling detail parts on buildings. It dries clear and can even be used to fill in cracks. It even can be painted over. This is great glue and is becoming one of my most used adhesives.

Now, the next level of glues. They are more dangerous to use, not water soluble like most of those previously mentioned, and require equal amounts of caution and common sense when working with them. Tenax 7R is advertised as “a space-age plastic welder” and that is exactly what it does. You can apply it with a toothpick and it instantly melts both edges of the plastic. It bonds in 10 seconds! It is great for joining walls and sections of buildings and is very valuable for kitbashing. Keep the cover on the bottle as it evaporates very quickly. Also, avoid the fumes since it carries the warning, “Harmful if swallowed or inhaled”.

“Super Glue” or CA is a type of mender for most materials. A little drop goes a long way. It dries quickly and is good for gluing wood, plastic, and metal. It will hold chimneys in place on buildings, so it is a favorite among structure modellers.

You can even get an accelerator (“kicker”) to make CA bond instantly. One word of caution, be careful not to get this glue on your fingers or other body parts [especially the eyes! –ed]. Once glued, it will be very difficult to get them separated. This hobo speaks from his “hands-on experience!” Keep some acetone (nail polish remover) on hand for those emergencies. If you work with CA, sooner or later you will need it.

Two-part epoxy is the next step up to gluing materials on the model railroad. When all else fails, epoxy comes to the rescue. Follow the directions by mixing Part 1 in a small container. Then add the second part (the hardener) to the first, mix, and apply to the materials. It will join most surfaces permanently. Some clamping is suggested. When dry, it will hold up under most conditions.

continued on next page
A relatively new adhesive, Gorilla Glue, is promoted as “the strongest glue in the world”. In all of my applications with the product, I would have to agree. Follow directions by coating both sides with a light coating of glue, then clamp. You have to clamp it. It may appear not to be adhering at first but when it sets up, it will provide a super strong bond. When dry, it will hold up and you will not need to glue the project again.

Contact cement comes in a little brown bottle with a handy brush in the cap. It has the consistency of thick honey. It is a matter of brushing on both edges of the project and clamping it for a time, usually overnight. This glue is especially helpful with benchwork and layout building. It also provides a strong, permanent bond.

Those are my notes and observations. Everything is clamped down and this hobo is ready to pack it in for the night. Check back next time for more highlights as my great adventure continues.
During the course of the many layout changes that have taken place on the BRHRR over the last few years, there have been as many, if not even more, changes to wiring and methods of conventional electrical control.

Once the dust had settled after the first round of layout changes, we rewired the operation for standard cab-control between yards. Although this is a well-proven system, we quickly found it to be limiting in the context of BRHRR operations. With the wisdom of hindsight, we decided to make a number of alterations to create a series of independent running tracks between each yard and the float terminal at Bay Ridge. This arrangement enables each operator to continue switching, without interruption from passing traffic to and from the float terminal. However, we still needed an electrical system to interconnect nominated yards and select which cab has control. I will let Bruce continue to explain how it all works.

The system now in operation uses a dedicated power wire or, as I prefer to call it, an interlock bus-bar. This runs side-by-side with a light-duty eight-core cable between each control panel along the full length of the layout. Behind each panel, these wires hook up to an interlock module, which in turn is connected to the cab display panel and power control unit (Photos 1 and 2). Each module comprises a control relay, a power relay, and four resistors in series with the respective control panel LED indicators, plus two rows of screw terminal connectors, all mounted on "stripboard".

A positive feed from an independent 12VDC regulated power supply runs in series through normally-closed relay contacts in each module. At the farthest control panel, the same wire then returns for parallel connection to the normally-open contacts of the ‘Command’ push-button of each interlock module. From the same positive feed, a connection is also made to normally-open relay contacts in each module. The description makes it seem more complicated than it is, and wiring is straightforward by virtue of the different colors used in multi-core cables. The circuit diagram shows how it all comes together, with switches and relay contacts set for a train to be pulled out of Bay Ridge under the control of Pier 31 (Figure 1, page 28).

Only one yard can have control at a time. If none of the indicators are illuminated, any yard can take control of the interlock bus-bar by pressing their respective ‘Command’ push-button. Upon being energized, the module control relay (A) holds itself in through its own contacts and energizes the interlock module power relay (B). Contacts in the power relay then change over, blocking supply to all other modules and, at the same time, connecting the respective yard power control unit to the interlock bus-bar. These same contacts also complete a circuit to illuminate an LED on each panel to show which cab has control of the mainline. Locomotive control from or to another yard, however, is not conferred until the other yard relinquishes control by flicking the "Local/ Mainline" switch on their panel to the "Mainline" position. Okay, perhaps I’m not using the most appropriate terminology, but that was all I could think of at the time. Once the command button has been activated, the interlock safeguards against other cabs gaining control at the same time. Upon completion of the inter-yard movement, pressing the “Release” push-button will terminate control over the mainline and extinguish the LED indicator on each panel (Photo 3).

A spin-off with this circuit is, by selecting "Mainline" on all panels, a train can be moved anywhere around the entire layout from any one cab, ideal for when you are on your own.

As you may have guessed by now, I like using relays. For those of us without an in-depth appreciation of electronics, the versatility of relays provides a simple and relatively low-cost solution for most basic control circuits. This method of interlock control obviously has its limitations, especially on large layouts with more than four to six cabs, but it is simple, reliable, and quickly understood by visitors to the layout.
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Postwar AAR Boxcars
Larry Kline

I have been accurately modeling freight cars in O Scale for more than 20 years. Prototypically accurate freight cars have been available in O Scale for much longer. The Rail Craft models, introduced in the late 1930s, are based on specific prototypes. The Athearn 40’ boxcar, introduced just after World War II, is an accurate model of the 1937 Association of American Railroads (AAR) 40’ boxcar. The Atlas sliding door car, introduced in 1972, is an accurate model of the AAR 40’ boxcars that were built between 1948 and 1957. Atlas-O has reissued this car (with a few modifications) in their Trainman line and the original models are available on eBay and at O Scale meets. This article shows how the Atlas boxcar can be used to model several versions of the AAR cars built after World War II with varying degrees of accuracy. Modifications resulting in more accurate models are also discussed. Except for the new Atlas-O car, the models shown were built around 1980 when much less prototype information was available.

More than 330,000 ARA/AAR all-steel boxcars with an inside length of 40’-6” were built between 1933 and 1961. The design was developed by the Car Design and Construction Committee of the American Railway Association’s Mechanical Division and was approved by the member railroads in 1932. In 1936 the ARA was reorganized as the Association of American Railroads. The boxcar design evolved in several ways as time went on. The approved inside height was increased two times, first to ten feet in 1936 and then to ten feet six inches in 1941. Most AAR standard boxcars built for US railroads used roof and end components supplied by the Standard Railway Equipment Manufacturing Co. (SREM). However, over time, the appearance of the SREM components changed with designs for cars with several different inside heights.

Roofs and ends from a number of manufacturers were also used, resulting in cars that looked different from those using SREM components. Additionally, a number of different door designs and sizes, along with a variety of different handbrakes and running boards, were used. All of these combinations led to considerable variation in the appearance of the AAR cars.

Ed Hawkins has compiled rosters for most of the ARA and AAR boxcars. These rosters include detailed information about the appearance of the cars and are currently available on the Steam Era Freightcars website [www.steamerafreightcars.com]. The book, Freightcar Models Vol. II, Boxcars Book 1, by Robert Schleicher, includes reprints of many articles, photos of the different car types, and descriptions of the nomenclature that freight car modeler-historians and model manufacturers have developed for the components of AAR boxcars.

More than half of the AAR steel boxcars were built using the SREM Improved Dreadnaught end. Freight car modeler-historians use the term “postwar AAR boxcars” for these cars. The first postwar cars were built by the Chicago Burlington & Quincy in August 1945. These cars used the same rectangular panel roof used on earlier cars. Most of the doors were manufactured by the Youngstown Steel Door Company and the Superior Car Door Company, using designs that evolved over time in widths of six, seven and eight feet. Photo 1, of SP&S #11100, illustrates the original Improved Dreadnaught end (IDE) and six-foot Superior doors. Photo 2, of P&WV #1200 built in January 1946, shows a slightly different version of the original IDE with a shorter top rib and eight-foot Youngstown doors. This version was used on cars with an inside height of ten feet four inches, such as those built for the CB&Q and Canadian railroads. Cars with a ten-foot inside height used a third version of the IDE with only three ribs in the top section of the end.
In 1948, SREM introduced a new design for the Improved Dreadnaught end and a new diagonal panel roof. The first cars that used the diagonal panel roof were built by the Illinois Central in April, 1948. The first cars that used both the new Improved Dreadnaught end and diagonal panel roof were built by the IC in July, 1948. Photo 3 shows the differences in appearance between the SREM rectangular panel and diagonal panel roofs on an Intermountain 1937 AAR boxcar (left) and a new Atlas-O Trainman boxcar respectively. Photo 4, of PRR class X43C #71064, shows the 1948 IDE with an eight-foot Youngstown door, reflecting a later design. A good model of this car has been available in O Scale since 1972, when Atlas introduced a new line of O Scale models. The Atlas car is an accurate model of the Pennsylvania Railroad X43C boxcar, of which 1,500 were built for the PRR in 1951 by The Mt. Vernon Division of the Pressed Steel Car Company.

Photo 5, of #71064, shows one of the four paint schemes used by Atlas when these cars were first released. This is the plain keystone scheme, which was the last paint scheme used by the PRR. Photo 6, of PRR #71398, shows the as-delivered “circle keystone” paint scheme for the X43C cars. This car was painted with Scalecoat II Oxide Red and lettered with Champ decals. The roof was repainted using a mix of Polyscale Steam Era Black and White to represent Dupont F1 car cement. The trucks were painted with Polyscale Roof Brown to represent road grime.

Atlas-O has recently released a new version of this car in their Trainman line. It has a see-through running board, the new Atlas-O cast steel trucks, and a simplified underbody. The new Atlas-O car, lettered PRR #60211, is shown in Photo 7. Atlas-O lettered the car for class X43A. The prototype X43A cars are similar to the X43C class, with seven-foot Youngstown doors and six-panel welded sides.

Photo 8, of P&WV #1265, shows one of the original Atlas cars painted for P&WV with no modifications. This car was painted with Scalecoat II Boxcar Red and lettered with Champ decals. A more accurate model could be built by removing the diagonal panel roof and replacing it with an Intermountain rectangular panel plastic roof or an Athearn metal roof, and by replacing the top rib on the Improved Dreadnaught end with a new rib using the prototype photo as a guide.

Photo 9, of B&O #468379, shows one of the original Atlas cars painted as a B&O class M-62 car with no modifications. This car was also painted with Scalecoat II Oxide Red and lettered with Champ decals. The B&O M-62 cars were built in 1956, and have a third version of the IDE. The version of this end, used on ten-foot inside height cars like the B&O M-62, is shown in Photo 10 (B&O #468399). Note that the shape of the ribs is different. The placard board has not been lowered on the model, but this would be an easy modification.

Most cars that used this style of car end had an inside height of ten feet six inches, and used a different version of the IDE with a rectangular rib above the three ribs in the top half of the end. The Hawkins article, on final 50-ton, AAR-standard 40’-6” boxcars, is a more detailed reference. Accurately modeling this end would require scratchbuilding.
Photo 8: P&WV #1200 series as-delivered paint scheme. Paint and decals by Larry Kline.


Photo 10: B&O Class M-62 #468399 built in April, 1956, by the American Car and Foundry Company. (ACF photo, Anderson Barkan King collection)

References

Rosters compiled by Ed Hawkins for 1932 ARA boxcars, 1937 AAR boxcars, modified 1937 AAR boxcars, and postwar AAR boxcars can be found at: [www.steamfreightcars.com/prototype/frtcars/protofrtcarsmain.html]

The book *Freightcar Models Vol. II, Boxcars Book 1*, by Robert Schleicher, has a number of articles about modeling AAR boxcars. [www.railmodeljournal.com/mainsite/Pages/subscribe.html]


[www.geocities.com/rpcyc/]

Information on PRR freight cars, including the X43 family of postwar AAR boxcars, can be found at: [prr.railfan.net/freight/]

Specialty Trains

Take a second and look at the train shown in Photo 1, simply one engine with two passenger cars. Any idea as to the function of this unit train? I’ll give you a hint. It’s not used for local commuter service. If you haven’t figured it out, here is the story. The first car behind the engine is BNSF #81 (ex-ATSF #63) Regal Crest. It is a generator-equipped, power, tool, and supply car for the rear car in the train. The rear car is BNSF #80 Rio Grande River, which has been converted into a track geometry test car. Both cars are company-converted passenger equipment which perform the vital function of checking track alignment and geometry.

Having operated this train several times over the years, let me explain how it works. First, the train crew is under the supervision of the crew operating the test car. Usually the Roadmaster, and Road Foreman of the territory being checked, also ride along. Once the technicians on the test car have their equipment under the car set up to start testing and checked for correct alignment, we’re ready to start. Once cleared to move by the test car, the train operates at maximum authorized speed for any and all track on the territory, up to 60 MPH in our case.

Track testing for the territory is usually done over a round trip. The mainline will usually be tested on one leg of the trip, while sidings are tested on the return trip. Depending on the flow of traffic and ability to access sidings, this can always vary. The geometry test car not only checks track alignment, but also curve super-elevation, grade alignment, and both narrow and wide rail gauge. The Roadmaster, on board the car, has the ability to notify a maintenance crew or the dispatcher to immediately protect a segment of track that may be found to be defective and require reduced-speed train operations. The test car can accomplish, in a matter of hours, what used to take a multitude of patrol crews several days to complete.

After the completion of a test run over a territory, the Roadmaster will have a detailed computer-generated printout of the track, showing any and all defects as well as areas that are in compliance but starting to show signs of deterioration. All this information aids in the assignment of resources and manpower to maintain the track for maximum-speed opera-

The creation of a model of this prototype train might be just the thing for someone who models modern operations of a Class 1 system, as I am sure other major railroads use the same or similar technology. To create models of these cars, a fluted- and smooth-side passenger car kit, such as by Kasiner, Mac Shops or American Standard, would be a good starting point. A scratchbuilding project would not be out of the question. Dick Scott’s article, “Styrene to Streamliner”, published in the January, 2004, edition of Model Railroader, explains how to use styrene to build a similar car. Plans could be tracked down via an Internet search, and more detailed photographs of these cars can be found at [www.rrpicturesarchives.net]. Whether modeling a prototype, or a railway system of your own creation, it would seem that a small fleet of passenger equipment would always be in order to handle those specialty needs of this modern day. There will always be the need for an Officer’s Special or that public relations train tour, so give it a thought. Until next time, “High-ball”.

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Pecos River..SF, WAB, NY, WM, NP, SP..$55-$40
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40' Trainsman..B&M, MEC, LN, NYC, PRR, UP, more..$37
X-29's..PRR, MEC, Erie, RDG, CNJ, more..$55-$62
HyCubes..60'..SF, WP, NS, SOU..$75. 40' ems..$37
90' MILW, NH, CNJ, B&O, MAT, SF, FL, NH, $45-$55
35' Aloha, Purina, B&M, IC, CNW, FEC..more..$37
60'..C&O, MTK, B&O, EL, RG, Sou, NW, WM, $40-$55
Weaver..ACY, BAR, B&M, B&O, CIM, CR, D&H, PHO, EL, GN, BLE, PC, MTH, NH, more..$20-$30

Refrigerator Cars - 2 rail
Weaver/Crown..B&M, BN, CV, CN, NYC, REA,
Dubuque, Nrn Refring, WIF, PRR..25+ roads..$20-$30
57' Mech..PFE, BN, WFE, Trop..10+ roads..$35-$45
Atlas..36' & 40' wood..Erie, NYC, CNW, SF, PFE,
Meats, beers, foods..25+ billboards..$45-$75
40' Steel, IC, NYC, ART, DLW, FGE, more..$48-$55
40' Plug door, NH, PRR, WM, RR, BAR, WAB, FGE
CNJ, NP, ATS, SF, N&W, ART, more..$37
53' express..REA, ARE, WP, MP, SOO, $69
K-line..PFE, ADM, CNJ, more..$40

Covered Hoppers - 2 rail
Weaver PS-2 and AC-2. BN, CB&Q, CNW, CP, PRR,
D&LW, B&M, C&O, EL, L&N, NY, NH,..$20-$30
50' Centerflow or Grain..CR, CP, LV, NVY, PRR, El,
Exlay, Dupont, ADM, Amoco, Arco, UP, more..$20-$25
Atlas..3 bay..UP, CB&Q, BN, Jack Frost..$37
ACF, Erie, CNW, SF, WP, NS, SOU..$75;  40' ers..$37
40' Steel, IC, NYC, ART, DLW, FGE, more..$48-$55
40' Plug door, NH, PRR, WM, RR, BAR, WAB, FGE
CNJ, NP, ATS, SF, N&W, ART, more..$37
53' express..REA, ARE, WP, MP, SOO, $69
K-line..PFE, ADM, CNJ, more..$40

Tank Cars - 2 rail
Weaver..40' & 50', new & old, 20+ roads..$30-$35
Atlas..33K..CNTX, ACFX, GLNX.. Sub Propane..$49
17K..Diamond, Hooker, Stautfer, ACFX, SHPX..$55-$60
8K..Bakelite, NE Alcohol, Phila Qtz, 10 more..$50-$55
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Wvr..20, LV, NY, CNJ, RG, SHPX, more..$20-$30

Gondolas - 2 rail
Atlas..40' composite..PRR, NYC, C&O, SP..$52
50'..B&O, CNJ, GN, NY, NYC, PRR, Rdg, Up, LV..$37
Wvr..CNJ, PRR, LV, RI, SF, UP, Rdg, NW, SOU..$27

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Photo Info Supplied

In response to Mr. Seaman’s question from the “Reader’s Feedback” in #34, about the photo specs for Warner’s Maumee Lines article, I used a Canon AE-1 with a 28mm lens stopped down to f2.8. Scenes were lit with one, sometimes two, 3200 Kelvin photo floods. I used regular one-hour processing and scanned the prints into my computer with an HP Scanjet 4670 scanner, where the images were cropped and converted to JPEG files for you. Really old school for the most part. I’m planning on going digital as soon as funds allow for a Nikon D80 (maybe in ’08.)

Richard Bourgerie uses a digital camera and manipulates his images with a software package that allows for tremendous depth of field. Here is his description.

“For the last year I’ve been using a Casio EX-Z750 with 7.2 megapixels. The camera has manual capability, so I can set it for aperture priority, and then stop it down to the highest number F-stop for maximum depth of field. It also has manual focus capability.”

“Recently, I’ve been using software I purchased online called Helicon Focus. I’ll take ten to 14 photos of the same scene, each one with a different focal length from ten centimeters to one meter. The software then takes all the photos and combines them seamlessly into one photo with excellent depth of field. Other software I use are Microsoft Digital Image Pro 9 and Adobe Photoshop for post-processing, adding effects such as the sky, or smoke and lights on the locomotives.”

Mike Cougill, Indiana

CTRRA #1

I see from the photographs that Brian Scace left the basement walls painted but uninsulated. This is contrary to much current wisdom of many building standards, but I am in agreement with Brian on this one in his decision not to finish the basement walls.

Twenty-five years ago, my basement was finished with tar paper, 2x4’s, fiberglass insulation and plastic vapour barrier. This was done according to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Standards (CMHC). But, there’s a problem in this because, although moisture entry is very slow it is insidious, and what enters as a gas (moisture) condenses against the cold concrete wall and migrates into the wood framing. CMHC is also the people who approved urea formaldehyde foam insulation back in the ’60s and then had it declared unsafe in the ’70s to everyone’s great expense. Now we have black mould, rotten studs, and a messy tedious job removing that insulation, not to mention the disruption to the layout.

In my humble opinion insulation belongs on the outside of the concrete such that the concrete rises to the temperature of the living space and does not get condensation dripping down it. I am now digging a trench around the house and putting in foam as deep as possible and then covering the exposed area with cement parging for protection.

In the 1600s, early settlers built their homes out of field stones covered by wood because the stones absorbed the heat from the fireplace during the day and slowly released it at night. The wood insulated the stones from the cold outside, but had to be replaced every so often because wood decays. Later occupants removed the rotted wood and, because the stones were pretty, insulated from the inside.

A finished insulated wood wall inside a basement may be pretty but it’s a bad idea.

Robert Langlois (via email)

CTRRA #2

Hi Brian,

Really good article on your model railroad. I appreciate the fact that it isn’t finished nor perfectionistic. There are a whole lot more like yours than the few that actually arrive at a finished state, including my own MSRY (Middlesex and Saraburg Railway) which is loosely modeled after the Attica and Arcade. It is mostly a switching layout in the shape of a U with a switchback at one end connecting it to a Pennsy branchline at one end and a bridge connecting it to the Erie at the other end.

Your unorthodox use of the old Atlas 2.5 switches and Roco flex track was reassuring. Given the space requirements for the MSRY and the deliberate use of a 24” radius curve at one corner of the U, I too had to use the old Atlas switches, Roco and AHM track. Seems we have both been around awhile to even know that those things existed.

I used hollow core doors and insulating foamboard for a foundation, set on the remnants of an earlier layout framework. So far so good. The MSRY runs two PRR A-5’s and a B-6 plus a gas electric car for passenger service during the 1940s and early fifties, and towards the end of the ’50s first generation Diesels, two 44-tonners, an Alco HH600, and an SW-1. On the Pennsy branch you will see an H-6, H-10, an E-6 (strayed a bit from its usual haunts) and two RS-3’s, an RS-1, a VO-1000 and a GE 44T. At the other end of the line, the Erie serves the connection with a VO-1000 and an ex Reading Cambell back 0-6-0.

Middlesex is a small industrial city with a power plant, feed processing company, furniture plant, a produce terminal, an electrical supply company, an oil terminal and a cement plant, plus a passenger station and separate freight house, engine house and an adjoining caboose and service track. It’s a pretty busy place. Between Middlesex and Saraburg (PRR junction) lies the village of Johannasville. A rural station, team track and a Bordens milk plant provide more traffic for the MSRY. Overall, the layout is about 12’ wide and 16’ long. No continuous runs here obviously, but plenty to do to keep one or two operators busy.

I started on it about two years ago when we moved to Burlington, Vermont, after I retired. I was torn between doing a B&M/NH connecting shortline and over the years had collected quite a bit of equipment for that. But I finally decided to sell off all that stuff and stick with the A&A analog. As you know, anything more recent than the 1950s creates problems in terms of car length. As it is, I have a few 50’ cars of the Tuscan red era that have to be gently coaxed through that 24” radius. The limitation provides a good financial discipline on the tendency to want to buy more and more. While that undoubtedly is good for the hobby, what it tends to do is overwhelm the owners who can never find space for a layout to accommodate all this equipment nor time to build it either.

I am a ways from having it scenic’d or...
properly wired or the buildings finished. Nearly all of the latter are in need of work. But once I get a little further along I will send you some photos and possibly an article based on the above info which should give you some idea of what I am attempting to do. Like I said, your article inspired me to think I might be able to send you something worth publishing without waiting for a finished product. which may never arrive anyway.  

Sarah Flynn, Burlington, VT

Brian writes: Thank you both for your kind words. Robert, you also put me in mind of a friend who, after taking his beautifully finished railroad down in preparation for a move, discovered that a slow water leak between his drywall and cinder block had caused enough mold growth such that the entire basement had to be gutted and redone before he could market the house. While certainly this is climate dependent to a degree (he lived in Virginia), it has made me choose carefully between a fully finished cellar space (my house is an older structure) and free-standing backdrops as a perfectly viable alternative. It’s worth thinking about your climate, age of that cellar and how it was built, and how the house or building is heated/air conditioned when considering fully finished spaces versus free-standing or modular railroad construction.

Sarah, and everyone else who has ever felt this way, I strongly encourage you to share some views of your work in progress. Don’t be afraid of it just because it isn’t finished. We are here to help folks (especially those in the generations behind us) to see what we build and how we build. What we have built is all well and good, but the most informative stages of “how it’s done” are often with the skin off. You might not think about it, but one of the biggest reasons for an article NOT getting in print is because there are few, if any, photos taken during the building, rather than after it’s finished. My advice to all is that we have more to teach about the process than just showing off the product. Everyone, write it up and take some images.

Prototype Modelers

I went to the Prototype Modelers Meet in Naperville, Illinois this past weekend. There are a number of these meets around the country and I think this meet is the largest. These meets are primarily HO Scale meets, however there are S and O Scale modelers who attend and display models. The people who attend are active modelers and bring models for display. The display room is roughly the size of a two-car garage and is full of display models.

I had a table, as did Mike McConnel from Chooch, Ted Schneff from Rails Unlimited, and Merlyn Lauber from Caboose Stop Hobbies. The HO Scale modelers are very impressed with the quantity and quality of O Scale models that are available.

I think these shows are fertile ground for bringing new people into O Scale. These people study the prototype and their knowledge of the prototype exceeds the limitations of HO scale. The larger size of O Scale appeals to them. The drawbacks are the perceived size requirements for a layout, the cost, and the availability of product. We can refute these concerns. At the Indy National we talked about O Scale Kings meeting about promoting O Scale. I would suggest that we make a concerted effort to have a display at these types of meets and address these concerns. Also the O Scale magazines should have a table to sign up new subscribers.

We see many very good small O Scale layouts, the rest of the hobby does not see them. The cost of O Scale equipment is more, but you don’t need as much of it. Lastly there is a lot of product available. The problem is that hobby stores will not stock O Scale product due to the limited market and advertising in non-O Scale magazines (MR) is prohibitively expensive.

As a manufacturer I would be willing to send $50-$100 per year to O Scale Kings for support of a traveling display highlighting what O Scale is and a list of O Scale manufacturers. Current advertising reaches people already in O Scale, but I would be willing to try to reach non-O Scale fans. If all other O Scale manufacturers would do the same, O Scale Kings could support a nice display and have it manned. I think it would be good for all of us.

Glenn Guerra, Mullet River Model Works

Brian writes: I, myself, concur. I’d also add that it would be an excellent idea for those folks putting on the Prototype Modelers Meet, and also those folks who are hooked up with the Prototype Modelers SIG, to get the word to us regarding meet info. I’d love to see this in the “Schedules” section in OST. Many, many, of us here are pretty rabid on the subject, but haven’t been privy to the meet info beforehand. The result could be increased O Scale participation in these meets on a personal level, increasing the meet popularity itself, as well as spreading the O word on a one-to-one basis between folks of common interest, yet different scale.

Can you get the word out to the meet organizers that we’d love to get their event info printed here?

The City Mail Pouch

I always enjoy the magazine! A couple of years (five?) ago, I found that it was getting progressively harder to see what I was doing in HO, and scratchbuilt a couple of boxcars in O, which came out acceptably and got me started back into the “king of gauges”. I expected to find almost nothing available in O, but have been pleasantly surprised at the cornucopia we’ve had in recent years. One change. In HO, I had an impossible mix of everything attractive. In O I’ve restricted myself to New Haven in the ‘40s, and again am surprised at how much has been available.

Anyway, to the subject. The Mail Pouch barn was a universal feature of rural scenes, but there was also an urban version. Anyone who rode the Long Island in the ‘30s or ‘40s will remember an urban version of the Mail Pouch barn described in the Nov/Dec issue. The New York Frame & Picture Company, of 110 Fulton Street, NY, had very similar ads, also in white and yellow lettering on a black background, on the back of every garage that backed up against the LIRR tracks. You saw the signs so frequently that you couldn’t forget the name! I think the last time I noticed one of these was in the 1970s, but there might still be one or two. Anyone modeling LIRR should include at least one of these.

Hank Raudenbush, via email

SP Caboose Info

My copy of OST #35 just arrived today and I read your review of the SP caboose and your comments on trouble finding info. I understand your problem. I had
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Jerry began model railroading in the 1930s, before the advent of the NMRA. His experiences with incompatible model railroads made him a staunch advocate of standards and, as an NMRA member, he worked hard on standards to all of our benefit.

He was fun loving, personable, and always quick to crack a joke. A longish obituary that touches on his many contributions and accomplishments can be found at [http://www.rodmiller.com/jerry_white_obituary].

Thank you to the many who already have shared condolences and your personal experiences with Jerry.

Rod Miller

Indy Contest Photo Correction

I enjoyed the recent issue covering the Indy show. There were a few problems with some of the photo captions. The most glaring one is the Cotton Belt drover’s caboose. The builder is Jim Zwernemann and I believe he won first place with it, not the B&O wagen-top caboose listed in the text.

Gene Deimling

Likes the Traction Action

Roger, you continually amaze me by writ-
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Gerald Brothers, via email
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Prr GG1- Tuscan dummy $200

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WEAVER

Prr GG-1, Tuscan 1 Stripe & Silver 1 stripe $850

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Jan/Feb '08- O Scale Trains • 45
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A Short Story about Short Circuits

Many of us O Scale modelers begin by using the less expensive plastic train cars with plastic trucks and wheels. Whatever other good or bad features these cars have, they do have one major advantage. They don’t conduct electricity, so they can’t cause electrical problems.

But, along the way changes happen. Perhaps we accumulate some old cars or we upgrade to new ones with metal center-sills, trucks, and wheels. Maybe we replace the plastic trucks with metal ones because we prefer them. I am convinced that metal wheels work better, although I have no proof for that. They certainly sound better. I have even sawed notches in my rails every 39’ (scale) to provide the clickety-clack sound of the bolted joint days. Any of these changes can cause electrical problems, ranging from a short circuit that shuts you down but is easy to find, to an intermittent short that can drive you crazy.

It all starts with the metal wheels. Almost all metallic 2-rail wheelsets (I’m sure there is an exception someplace) have one wheel on each axle insulated from the axle and everything else. The non-insulated wheel connects the truck to whatever metal might be in the car and that leads to the first problem. Metal cars with metal trucks and wheels create an electrical path between the two bolsters. If one truck gets rotated 180 degrees, there can be a short circuit through the car. Of course, the solution is to reverse one truck.

Some cars use track voltage to power their lights, such as passenger cars and cabooses. Here, the trucks are connected to the interior circuit. Rotating one truck will keep the lights from working.

Whether a car uses or does not use electricity, it may still have a temporary short circuit. An insulated wheel rim may touch part of the car, a stirrup, or a coupler box, when going around a curve or on a grade. You can grind away the affected area and inspect the car to be assured there are no accidental contacts. Painting the area will just postpone the problem until it’s dark out, turn out the room lights, and look for the sparks. There it is! –ed

I have found that very difficult (An easier way might be to insulate the trucks from the car with a non-metallic machine screw and non-metallic washer.) Remember that neither the screw head nor the screw shank can touch the coupler box, and the coupler box cannot touch the carbody. A better approach might be to try this. Digi-Key sells nylon #2-56 and #4-40 machine screws in various lengths (for example #2-56 by 3/4” nylon machine screw, H-538-ND, 100 for $9.26 and #4-40 by 3/4” nylon machine screw, H-550-ND, 100 for $9.19). Then you should insulate between the coupler box and the car with a small piece of paper.

You could also use Kadee #800, #801 or #804 couplers, which are made of plastic in different colors and fit into a standard-sized Kadee coupler box, or #806 couplers which are also plastic and come with a shorter coupler box. These are not as strong as the metal ones (You may recall that I tested a Kadee #805 coupler to destruction at 74 pounds load.) You can even put metal couplers into plastic coupler boxes and vice-versa.

You can test for sneak electrical paths with an ohmmeter or a battery and small light bulb. I have a test track with the battery hookups already in place. I just set the car down, wiggle the wheels and trucks, and look for red lights.

The photo shows an example of a “time bomb car”, an old NYC Pacemaker 40’ boxcar. At first glance it looks harmless. It is a kit with a wood floor and ceiling and pressed board sides, over which is a thin pressed-metal shell with the detail and the paint. There is a metal center-sill that secures the trucks, so they are connected together. The center-sill does not go as far as the coupler boxes, but the metal cross braces touch the center-sill to the metal shell and the coupler box lips also touch the metal shell. In effect, all the metal in the car is connected to one rail. Moreover, when the trucks turn, the wheel rims can touch the metal cross brace and the metal coupler box, thus shorting out the track.

See if you can find any cars like this on your layout. [More recent readers may not have heard this tip, so I’ll repeat it here with Ted’s indulgence. If you are having problems figuring out where that sneaky intermittent short is, wait until it’s dark out, turn out the room lights, and look for the sparks. There it is! –ed]
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<th>Item</th>
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<td>3 Drunken men</td>
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<td>Brakeman with flag</td>
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News: Depot Kits, MSRP: see text
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314-646-8588 • www.laserkit.com

Kit #450 Southern Pacific Combination Type 23 Depot, MSRP $279.95.

AMB announces the release of kit #450, a Southern Pacific Combination Type 23 Depot. Between 1877 and 1894, the Southern Pacific developed a series of 26 standard depot plans. Of these designs, the One Story Combination Depot Number 23 was used as the basis for over 30 station structures. Built between the years of 1896 and 1918, examples of the Type 23 could be found in both California and Oregon. Although not as numerous as its two-story cousin, the Type 22 with its upstairs living area, the one-story building featured a passenger waiting room, operator’s office, agent’s quarters, separate express room, and freight room.

Our O Scale rendering of this classic 80’ x 25’ Southern Pacific design follows the company’s 1911 revised plans. As modeled, the O Scale building has a 42’ freight room with a 60’ x 33’ freight dock on the freight end. Photos of depots built to this plan show a multitude of variations from building to building in the number and placement of windows and doors, as well as in the style of doors. This later version of the Type 23, for example, is denoted by its two adjacent windows on the end wall of the waiting room. Earlier Type 23 depots utilized three windows spaced across the end. While we have modeled the dock and housetrack location at the front of the building with a “right hand” bay window, many had the housetrack located on the back side of the building.

This latest O Scale LASERKIT features 100% laser-cut parts with tab-and-slotted wall and roof construction, premilled siding, peel-and-stick windows, doors, and trims, peel-and-stick three-tab style shingle strips, white metal smokejacks, interior floor and wall partitions, exposed rafter tails, properly shaped roof brackets, and a separate wood loading dock with both stairs and ramp access. The assembled structure itself measures 20” x 6.25” x 6”. With the addition of the dock, the facility stretches almost 30” in length, making it not only the longest 1/48 scale structure cataloged by American Model Builders to date, but a true visual centerpiece for any O Gauge layout.

Kit #470 Northern Pacific Class C Depot, MSRP $159.95.

Over the years, the Northern Pacific used several different series of standard plans for various types of depots. Most of the plans were of combination depots containing passenger and freight facilities. Each series had several different sizes of depots and included both one-story and two-story structures. In the years 1889 through 1899, Chief Engineer J. W. Kendrick directed the preparation of a group of plans referred to as the S-26 drawing series. The series included plans for three different lengths of one-story depots with each length having two versions. One version had a low platform and the other had a high platform. The longest one-story frame combination depot in the S-26 series was 75’ 8” x 24’. The smallest version with a low platform, the Class C Combination Depot and the subject of this new O Scale kit release, was 55’ x 24’. The Class C prototype basically saw the elimination of the waiting room found on the larger classes, as well as utilized a smaller operator’s bay with several changes in door and window positions.

Our O Scale rendering of the NP Class C Combination Depot features 100% laser-cut parts including tab-and-slotted wall and roof components, peel-and-stick windows, doors, and trim, authentic roof and gable brackets, interior floor with wall partitions, white metal chimney, peel-and-stick three-tab style shingles, and color signage. The assembled structure measures 16.5” x 8.75” (including roof overhang) x 5”.

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#450

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News: Structure Components and Castings
Westport Model Works, 24 Cob Drive, Westport, CT
06880
203-226-2798 • www.westportmodelworks.com

Westport Model Works displayed, at the TCA meet in York, their new resin castings for building panels and interior and exterior details. An example is the combination USPS and Railway Express facility created from their Resin Building Casting Set #1. These are not kits, but individual resin-cast wall panels that enable you to choose from a variety of panel designs to create a building to your custom size and configuration. Among the many buildings that can be created from this set are row houses, a railroad station, warehouse, LCL facility, or small manufacturing plant. The only limitation is your imagination.

Shown above is an interior photo of the USPS portion of the building, showing a few of the 130+ interior and exterior resin castings that can be used to detail your structures. Specific to this building are the postal letter sorting table, hanging mail bags and stands, and assorted mail sacks. Another specific example is, for their firehouse, they offer castings for a rolled hose, fireman’s boots, helmet, and coats. General interior items shown are roll-top and plain wood desks, swivel chairs and clothes locker. Contact Westport Model Works for availability and prices.

Review: SpecCast 1:50 White WC22 Dump Truck, MSRP:
$37.95
Available from Diecast Direct, 3005 Old Lawrenceburg Rd, Frankfort KY 40601
502-227-8697 • www.diecastdirect.com

Reviewed by Joe Giannovario

I started looking for a dump truck to fit in with my late 40’s-early 50’s theme. I wanted it to haul cinders out of the branchline locomotive servicing area. I searched all over and could not find anything suitable for a reasonable price. Brooklin makes a 1:43 1947 International dump truck, but it costs $99.50 and seems to always be out of stock. Then I saw an ad for the SpecCast 1:50 WC 22 dump truck.

I checked around and found that Diecast Direct would let me pre-order the truck which was due, according to the ad, in January 2008. So, imagine my surprise when the truck showed up in early November.

I can’t really do a “proper” review since I don’t have any plans or specs for the prototype. What I can tell you is that this is a very nice model of an early 1950s dump truck and it is perfect for my needs.

The model has working doors and hoods with a nicely detailed engine. The dump bed lifts and the tailgate swings free with chains. The color is a bit bright but I can weather that down. This model also comes in a “John Deere” version that is bright yellow. As for the scale, I’d much rather have a 1:50 model then a 1:43.

Overall, this is a really nice dump truck and the price is not too expensive. After all, I don’t need a fleet of them and this will be in the foreground.

SpecCast makes other 1:50 construction equipment including a White WC22 tractor with lowboy trailer and an International TD-24 bulldozer. Check them all out at Diecast Direct online or call SpecCast at 800-844-8067, ext. 245, and ask for a catalog. Tell them you saw their dump truck in O Scale Trains Magazine.
The Quantum Magnum decoder, shown on page 49 of Issue #35, is available and ready for installation. The Quantum Programmer is also available and ready to upgrade any QSI decoder equipped with Version 7 chips. We will cover each item separately and finalize with an overall evaluation. First, the Quantum Magnum.

**Quantum PnP Sound Decoder**

While the Quantum Aristo is also available (intended for G Scale), the O Scale modeler will want to initially look at the Quantum Magnum for O Scale, which includes a plug-in power board with screw-down terminals for the wiring connections. Included with the decoder were printed instructions showing a G Scale installation, as well as drawing showing the wiring and plug connections.

If you have done decoder installations in the past, you will have no problem with this decoder. The O Scale installer will need to follow the connection diagram for board #670-0153-01. The connections are pickup positive and negative, motor positive and negative, and both unregulated and forward-and-reverse headlight connections. The board will require either an 8-ohm or 16-ohm speaker. A volume reed switch and plugs for the speaker and chuff switch were included with the reviewed unit.

I did a temporary installation into a Weaver U-25b that was sitting on the shelf waiting for a decoder. Installation was quick. Next, it was off to the program track to activate the address. Activating the short address and programming the long address worked fine with my NCE Power-Pro cab. Then, it was on to the mainline, dial in the address, set the direction, and advance the throttle.

The speaker came to life with the announcement of the software. The sound was great though, the whistle fantastic, and my first thought was, “I could have a ball with this!” At this time I am not that much into steam, so the question was how do we make this U-25b sound like a GE Diesel locomotive? The Quantum Programmer corrects this situation.

**Quantum Programmer**

As reviewed, the programmer package consists of the installation and instructions guides for both the programmer and “CV Manage”, the programmer, power supply, a USB cable that connects the programmer to a USB port on your computer, and two software CD’s.

I took a couple of days to read through the instruction and installation manuals to get a feel for the programs and how they work. As a note to all, this software is designed for use with Windows XP or Vista operating systems. I installed the software onto my laptop following the instruction manual and the Windows “Installation Wizard” prompts. You will need to make a powered program track, separate from the layout, that will connect to the programmer. A piece of flextrack mounted to a 1x4 with 18 gauge wire soldered to the rail and attached to the screw terminals on the programmer completed the preparations.

Operating the programs, to shorten a long story, I encounter a couple of minor problems (due in part to not following instructions) that resulted in a telephone call and e-mail to QSI. The people at QSI were very helpful, I found that some of the software on the installation disks has been upgraded by QSI and was available as a download, and necessary to operate the programmer with the Q2 firmware.

After updating, it was time to make the U-25b sound like a GE engine. I loaded the Q2 “-9” firmware. I retrieved the locomotive information from the U-25 on the program track, verified it would work, performed a compatibility check confirming we were ready to update. Upgrading the locomotive took about five minutes. Once complete, the laptop displayed a message that the update was finished. I reprogramming the short and long address of the decoder, and it was back to the main track. Again, dial in the address, set the direction and advance the throttle. The voice responded again with the firmware and chip number and then S-O-U-N-D, GE locomotive sound, not U-25b sound but rather a GE - 944 sound. I know what a prototype GE - 9 sounds like.

**Summary**

I am not a computer expert by any means. If I can install this and make it work, so can the average modeler. It is not an extremely complicated system and, from what I have seen it can do, it will set the standard for a long time to come.

Having not dealt with sound since my exit from TMCC, I did set up the system and take an Atlas O TMCC 8-40-B out of storage to compare the sound between the two systems. In my opinion, QSI sound is superior in quality, correctness and detail in comparison to TMCC sound.

For the O Scale modelers who have been waiting for an aftermarket upgrade for your Silver Series Atlas O Engines, your wait should now be only for the correct sound file to be released by QSI. In my conversations with the people at QSI, I was told that software, as well as new sound files, are in the works and will be released for download as soon as possible. Those modelers who decide to purchase and operate this system should keep checking the QSI website for new upgrades. I was also told by QSI that the power supply furnished with this review sample was rated at 300mA and has since been found to be insufficient for the O and G decoders. QSI now recommends a 500-800 mA power supply be used for O and G Scales. Check out these items at [www.qsisolutions.com](http://www.qsisolutions.com) to see what these products will do, since what I have covered in this review is only a quick look at the possibilities.
Canter Rail Services, 1203 Rotherham Lane, Beech Grove, IN 46107-3323 • 317-782-3322

Reviewed by Mike Cougill

We don’t often see the insides of many boxcars. Railroads prefer to have the doors closed and secured, while the car is in transit, to keep cargo and loose debris in and unwanted passengers out. Occasionally, you might see an empty car with the doors open. Representing this on a model involves scratchbuilding an interior of some sort, or putting up with the bare plastic insides.

Jim Canter has produced a line of interior kits designed to fit most Atlas 40’ transition-era boxcars. He has a separate set for the Atlas X29 boxcar, along with floor inserts for the Atlas and Lionel gondola cars (MSRP: $12), plus a deck for the Red Caboose flat cars (MSRP: $10). Two varieties of wall panels are available, one representing individual board walls and one with plywood sheathing for later-era construction. Both sets consist of five pieces, a floor, and right- and left-hand wall pieces of 1/16” thick laser-cut and scribed basswood (Photo 1). The parts are cleanly scribed, fuzz-free and feature a complete nailing pattern, along with the load level marks on the walls for grain loading of corn, barley, rye, wheat and so on. The laser-cut lettering is miniscule, but readable. It’s amazing what this technology can do.

I had a 1970s vintage Atlas boxcar that I fitted with a set of plywood sheathing inserts. Removing the body from the underframe is the easiest route to go. Once I had the body off, I found a pair of cast-on ridges on each side of the door that prevented the wall inserts from laying flat. I chose to cut these ridges off to make a flat interior wall surface. A couple of minutes with a cut-off disk in my Dremel tool made short work of things. A little touch up with an emory board, and the panels laid nice and flat. Another issue with my car was the cast-on lugs that the upper door tracks fit into (They can be seen above the door in Photo 2.) These also interfered with the fit of the panels. I simply notched the wall panels around these lugs, rather than try to remove them and remount the tracks. This didn’t take any time at all and was a lot easier.

There was a slight hiccup with the fit of the floor panel too. Even though it doesn’t run the whole length of the car, I had to trim it around the truck mounting lugs or screws. Once past these little snags, things went together without a hitch, and the results look great. I used thick gel-type CA adhesive to secure the wall panels in place. You could also try doublesided tape or an epoxy. Watch out for rubber cement or similar adhesives, as they tend to warp plastic when used in large quantities.

These inserts make a nice interior detail for rolling stock, whether it’s Standard O, P48, or Hi-Rail, and would be useful to scratchbuilders too.

Review: Lionel PS-4 TOFC Flat Conversion MSRP: $95.00
Norm’s O Scale Trains, PO Box 147, South Casco, ME 04077 207-655-2550 • www.normsoscale.com

Reviewed by Brian Scace

Although Lionel appears to be firmly committed to the three-rail marketplace, several of their offerings are worth considering for two-rail applications. To this end, we have a new player in town, Norm’s O Scale.

Norm was showing his conversions of Lionel’s PS-4 flatcars, with trailers, at the 2007 Indianapolis O Scale National, and they were extremely popular. Our sample arrived ready to plunk down on the track, with Kadees and Intermountain wheelsets very elegantly installed. A quick once-over with the ever-present Kadee and NMRA gages showed all critical interchange dimensions to be just fine. The workmanship of the conversion is first-rate. Everything was neatly done.

The car, as it comes from Lionel, isn’t a bad candidate for this type of attention. About the only thing I would do at this point would be to fill in the end-beams (notched for three-rail Talgo couplers), add a gubitz here and there, and give the whole thing a good weathering up. By the way, for you ‘40s/’50s folks, the trailers are actually very nice models of the 20’ round-nose boxes typical of the era. I’d love to find more of these separately! They are quite good.

Anyway, these cars are very nicely converted; the workmanship is quite good. Roadnames, subject to availability from Lionel, currently include UP, C&O (with REA trailers), CNW, Milwaukee, PRR, NP, DL&W, and NYC (with Pacemaker trailers). I hope Norm and his minions are in the car converting business for the long haul.
Review: Kohs & Co., N&W/VGN Wood and Steel Cabooses, 
MSRP: $525 Wood, $495 Steel 
Kohs & Company, PO Box 689, Clarkston, Michigan 48347 
248-625-6396 • www.kohs.com

Reviewed by Joe Giannovario

The Prototype

George Kohs has done a great service to N&W and Virginian modelers by importing models of the N&W CF and C2 cabooses. Some historical details can be found in my article “Scratch-building an N&W Steam-Era Caboose” in OST #20 (May/June 2005). I also recommend “Cabooses of the Norfolk and Western”, by Robert G. Bowers and James F. Brewer, published by the Norfolk & Western Historical Society [www.nwhs.org], PO Box 13908, Roanoke, VA 24038.

The N&W CF wood caboose is a classic N&W design which had a lengthy service life. The construction of the 381 cabs started in 1914 and they served well into the Diesel era undergoing many changes and modifications along the way. Kohs has offered the CF in several paint and lettering variations to cover operations from 1940 through 1966. The C2 steel caboose is offered in paint and lettering variations covering 1949 through 1971. The N&W C2 was also used as class C-10 on the Virginian. The Virginian cab paint and lettering offered covers the period 1949 to 1959.

The Model

I am focusing here on the CF wood caboose. The model comes painted, lettered and lighted. I chose to order the earliest wood version which covers the period October 1940 through December 1947. This is the paint scheme that uses the “&” rather than the word “and” between Norfolk and Western.

The body sides are actually made of laser-scribed wood, both inside and out. The body is painted bright red. The roof is a muddy-brown. Lettering is white. The end platforms, frame and trucks are black. This is all correct per N&W specifications.

Every window and door that would open on the prototype, opens on the model. If you look closely at the model photo, you will see that the front and rear cupola windows are open. They have tiny latches that work, too.

The roof is removable, but be careful if you decide to peek inside. The cupola windows will fall out when you remove the roof. I almost had a heart attack when this happened, but I found it was quite easy to get the windows back in place when I replaced the roof. Just be prepared.

The interior is nicely detailed and lighted. The layout matches the plan view in the Bowers and Brewer book. The toilet area is occupied by the lightpipe circuit which is adjustable for intensity. I liked the dimly lit appearance from the factory setting and the bulbs will last longer that way.

The model comes with removable marker lamps. Instructions included with my model said the lamp housings were a tight fit in the brackets, so I decided to test fit them before attempting to install the bulbs. I found the fit quite loose and actually lost one housing during the course of the review photography. I have since applied a dab of white glue to the bottom of the housing and bracket to keep them in place.

The marker lamps may be installed at either end of the cab, and electrical fittings are provided under each roof overhang. I used a tweezer to install the fittings first, then threaded the bulbs up to the marker lamps. Both bulbs must be plugged in for the lamps to light. Getting the housings with bulbs installed takes some patience and care but the end result is worth the effort.

The underframe is the most detailed I have seen yet on an N&W caboose model. It represents the steel underframe used on these cabs, and includes complete brake rigging and piping. These cabs come with true-to-scale couplers which open with a working cut lever.

Fidelity

Several plans have been published (including our own) of N&W cabooses, but Kohs used official N&W drawings received through the N&W Historical Society. I can find no significant differences in any major dimensions. The paint and lettering on my CF and C2 samples were extremely well done. The lettering is nice and sharp. If there is a flaw here someone more intimately familiar with these cabs needs to let me know.

Compatibility

continued next page
Review: “Savings Bond” EMD SD40 (2-Rail Gold) MSRP: $479.95  
AtlasO LLC 378 Florence Ave, Hillside, NJ 07205  
908-687-0880 • www.atlaso.com

Reviewed by Brian Scace

When Atlas sent us one of the new SD40s to review, I was actually curious to know why, since we looked at the previous run of these units equipped with QSI DCC several issues ago. Well, here’s a unit with a different twist to it. Atlas has picked a couple of the icons from the 1970s and 1980s to model as “Special Runs”, the Conrail “Savings Bond” SD40, and the CNJ “Red Baron”. Both of these engines were unique, the former was a one-of-a-kind rolling ad for US Savings Bonds, and the latter was the only large CNJ unit to receive their flashy red scheme. Railfans in the Northeast regularly exchanged information about the whereabouts of these units for as long as they wore their unique dress.

The “Savings Bond” SD40 has an interesting history outside of mere dress, just by virtue of the unit’s longevity. Built by EMD back in early 1966, she wore the DGLE (“Brunswick Green”) and keystones of original owner PRR. As PC entered the picture, she was painted black, but retained her original road number, 6047. Upon the creation of Conrail, 6047 became 6300, and eventually wore the scheme that made the unit famous in the railfan community. In 1993, 6300 was rebuilt to Dash-2 standards, emerging as SD40-2r 6982. Conveyed to Norfolk Southern during the Conrail breakup, the unit survives today as 3437. At forty-plus years, this survivor is older than many of the folks who run it today.

Fidelity

As with the previous runs of these engines, the basic dimensions are where they should be, and the fit, finish, and detailing are as we have come to expect from Atlas. The story this time around is in the graphics, of course. This is a complex lettering exercise, what with all sorts of stars and extra slogans adorning a modified Conrail blue background scheme. Our sample was neatly executed and matches up with my photos of this unit nicely, a good reproduction of a very complicated set of graphics.

Compatibility

Everything applicable checked out with the on-hand NMRA and Kadee gages. About the only compatibility issue I can find, testing the unit with conventional DC, DCC, and with an MRC “Black Box” occurs in straight DC cab control. Because the QSI system doesn’t allow the unit to start moving until about half of the available voltage is applied, MU’ing with other manufacturer’s Diesel power isn’t practical using conventional DC control. I wonder if it would be worth Atlas’ time to look into putting a slide-switch underneath future offerings that would allow the DC cab control guy to bypass the QSI system entirely, so he could MU the newer Atlas Gold offerings with previous Atlas (not to mention other manufacturers) units already on his roster. Might be an extra sale or two in this idea.

Performance

The lighting used for the headlights is the yellow-white LED’s used in Atlas’ previous run of SD-40. The sound is rich and clear. It sounds like an SD40. Operations in DCC are quite similar to those QSI-equipped units already reviewed. Using default settings, the top speed is higher than I care for, low end is a little jerky getting going, and the usable speed range is proportionally reduced thereby. Some thoughtful time spent with speed table CV’s will reduce the top speed, gaining controllability in the process.

All in all, a decent model of a Northeastern railfan icon, and an interesting new twist from Atlas in making “Special Run” models of some of the units that many folks, armed with camera and scanner, remember as high points of the hunt.

Conclusions

On first blush, you may think these models are too pricey. However, I spent upwards of 25 hours scratchbuilding a CF without an interior, which could easily double that effort. For 50 hours labor you cannot find a custom-builder who would touch a project like this for less than a $1000, probably more. With all the fine detail, paint and lettering, plus the 11 different variations offered, you can’t match the value.

George Kohs has raised the bar once again, at least for N&W modelers. These cabs make a fine complement to his N&W Y6a and Y6b offerings.
Bill Neshitt sent this photo of his latest model. The privy is a Paper Creek free download with added detail — a roll of paper and an O Scale copy of O Scale Trains Magazine on the seat!

Gerald Brothers sent a photo of a Crane Car fashioned after a car on the Quebec Railway Light & Power Co. The crane is a Crow River Products pewter model. The car is almost all styrene with metal details. Trucks are CLM Peckham 40 sidetfaces powered by Q-Car Co. The car is shown on the RCBH&W third rail division in the town of Mystic. The crane does clear a 21' overhead wire.

Daniel LePage sent a couple pictures of his conversion of a K-Line 3-rail Diesel to 2-rail. This is stage one. He says he needs to do some more detail work on this when he get the chance (he is moving) and will send more photos then.
Gerald Brothers sent a photo of a Crane Car fashioned after a car on the Quebec Railway Light & Power Co. The crane is a Crow River Products pewter model. The car is almost all styrene with metal details. Trucks are CLM Peckham 40 sideframes powered by Q-Car Co. The car is shown on the RCBH&W third rail division in the town of Mystic. The crane does clear a 21’ overhead wire.

Juerg Luetscher sent us these photos from his home in Switzerland. They were shot on a friend’s modular layout in natural light.

SP’s famous Daylight streamliner makes a brief stop at the station. The cars were scratchbuilt in styrene by Juerg.

SP GS-4 #4447 has come to a stop just outside of the station shed, while on the track behind a second Daylight train waits for its departure.

SP GS-3 4-8-4 #4421 speeds a fast mail train into the evening. The low sun gives the locomotive a realistic look.
Frank Miller is scratchbuilding this N&W M2 for Joe from plans acquired through the N&W Historical Society. The tender is from a PSC N&W Z1a.

This traction item is a scratchbuilt line car lettered for Martin Brechbiel’s Chambersburg, Greencastle & Waynesboro line. Martin worked from a prototype photo of a similar line car.

This is one of OST Publisher Joe Giannovario’s personal projects. It’s a conversion of an MTH PRR H3 into N&W G1 #6. The cab is a resin casting by Ed Reutling that Joe modified to fit the H3. The cylinders and running boards still need to be lowered and other details added. These locos were built in 1897 and ran into the mid-1950s.
The locomotive is an old Locomotive Workshop kit of a PRR H1 2-8-0 built as #52 of the Cumberland Valley RR. Martin Brechbiel worked from photos in History of the Cumberland Valley Railroad 1835-1919, by Paul J. Westhaeffer.

This is a scene from Bob Boelter’s Great Western RR which was the featured layout is OST #24.

CHICAGO “O” SCALE MEET
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Considered the best O Scale show of the year------Limited tables available------Register early for your preprinted badge
In the magazine biz we call this a “teaser”. We received these photos from master locomotive builder Tom Mix with this note: “I have experimented with means to shift the valve gear on a steamer. The sample attached photos show one engine (a 4-8-2) under construction that shifts pretty well, although it needs some improvement. There is a slightly different method on a 2-10-4 that also works. I have several projects in motion and I will try to set them aside and get something written up.” Oh, yeah! Look for Tom’s article in OST later this year.

Here’s another teaser. Ed Reutling and Martin Brechbiel will tell us how Ed built this trestle in the next issue of OST (#37).
Conley Wallace sent along these photos from his recent open house. Conley is an N&W/VGN modeler.

The first scene is a work-in-progress. The two brick buildings are kits. Everything else is scratchbuilt. The N&W tracks in the foreground pass before a model of the Coaldale tower.

A pair of VGN Trainmasters with a string of empties. The locos are reworked and detailed Williams shells with Central Locomotive Works drives. All of the houses are models of specific prototypes from southern West Virginia.

A VGN “battleship” gon scratchbuilt in brass by Conley.

A pair of VGN Trainmasters with a string of empties. The locos are reworked and detailed Williams shells with Central Locomotive Works drives. All of the houses are models of specific prototypes from southern West Virginia.
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The Southern New England Model Railroad Club began as an informal group of O Scale modelers, known as the Southern New England “O” Scalers. The group was organized by John Roberts, at the request of Robert Buck (then the Show Director for the Amherst “Big” Railroad Hobby Show). Bob was interested in giving O Scale a larger presence at the upcoming show in February of 1991. The original layout built for the 1991 show was 45’ x 21’. Over the years the SNEOS has evolved into The Southern New England Model Railroad Club, with a layout that has grown to 81’ x 33’. Today the layout uses DCC operation with bi-directional signals and interlocking indications.

Some of the features on the layout include over 200’ of double track mainline with a scale 475’ double-track mainline bridge scene. The layout has arrival and departure yards, a large Diesel servicing facility, and a steam servicing facility including a turntable and roundhouse. There is an industrial switching area, a freight yard with a capacity of over 200 cars, and a newly constructed express and coach yard. The equipment operated on the layout ranges from steam-era freight and passenger service up to and including the most modern Diesel power running intermodal service.

The Central Ohio O-Scale Engineers was formed in the summer of 1993. At its first meeting, it was decided that the club would focus on building a portable modular two-rail O Scale layout. Specifications were developed and work began almost immediately. By the fall of 1994, the first modules were set up as part of modular layout with the Indianapolis club at a show in Richmond, IN.

COOSE was established by 22 members of an earlier group that operated a model railroad display at the Ohio State Fair for 12 years. Part of that display was a 1,500 square-foot O Scale layout. The double-track mainline features two 25-car passing or storage sidings at one end. Originally, a shorter trolley loop was planned, but designing a transportable overhead system proved impossible, so it became the branchline. In later years, additional spur tracks and 60-car stub-end storage yard were added inside the squared oval-shaped layout. The length of the layout can be almost anything, from as little as 40’ to as much as 100’ with a width of 15’.

The Central Jersey O Scalers’ model railroad modules allow for big trains running over serious territory. After seeing Bill Driscoll’s large O Scale Ammonoosuc Valley modular layout (as well as others), complete with double track mainlines and yard trackage, Russ Kress and Pete Hess each made their own plywood and foam 30” x 72” modules. They were designed and built, complete with scenery and working Pennsy signals, to be combined with Bill’s layout in New Hampshire and West Springfield, MA. Then, John Dunn and Buzz Burnley joined, with their four-foot and six-foot modules including two very prototypical modules featuring the Absecon, NJ, station. Chris Bond helped build the Central Jersey O Scalers’ six corner-modules. Built on lightweight doors, they serve to close the circle and permit continuous running without long-range visits by Bill Driscoll and Bill Johnson. Jim Kerner has added new Bachmann-based narrow-gauge trackage, rolling stock, and vehicles to the layout.

The East Penn Traction Club is a group based in the Delaware Valley/Philadelphia area, with over 300 members. Members share a common interest in the history and modeling of electric-powered rail transit vehicles, known more affectionately as trolleys or streetcars. The models actually take their operating current from the overhead wire, just as the prototype does. East Penn is perhaps best known for its adoption and promotion of modular layouts, having refined the original standards formulated by the late Everett F. Wood in 1969. This concept allows for the quick assembly of large layouts capable of complex operating possibilities. Traction layouts generally, and modular layouts especially, are well suited to the sharp curves, short trains, compact and varied scenery typical of real electric transit lines.

Bill Driscoll’s layout started out as a simple 8’ x 16’ double-track mainline modular layout, originally used to display and sell O Scale model trains for his O Scale train shop. Bill worked with Jerry White and other modular groups to help develop the NMRA O Scale modular railroad standards. Bill’s railroad has developed into a 12’ x 36’ modular display, complete with scenery and double-track mainline. The main-line radii are 68” and 64” respectively, with passing sidings on one end. All trackage is code 148 Atlas with manually controlled Roco and Atlas switches. Bill Driscoll and Bill Johnson prefer to run steam motive power from Weaver and KTM imports as much as possible, with an array of rolling stock from Walthers, Athearn, All Nation, and brass imports. All of the rolling stock is equipped with Athearn trucks and metal wheelsets. Bill Driscoll prefers to model the SP and Bill Johnson the UP. Between them, they have an impressive line up of major SP and UP locomotives.

The Moose Creek Railroad and Timber Company is an On30 portable layout. It is a fictional logging railroad with scenes of logging and woods. It is approximately 23’ long and eight feet wide, made with ultra light technology. It is operated using North Coast Engineering digital command control (DCC). The timeframe represented is from 1920 to 1940, running Shays, Climax engines and other small steam engines. The layout is the work of four modelers, Roland Marcotte, Howie McCluskey, Bruce Erickson and Kirk Dyer.

The Connecticut Society of Ferroequinologists and Model Railroad Engineers has a portable modular O Gauge layout, occupying a rectangle approximately 12’ x 32’, that has been used for demonstrations and educational purposes at train events in southern New England. An O Gauge model railroad club centered in Manchester, Connecticut, it has had a permanent layout in a retail store since the 1980s. The club had its beginnings in 1952. With a roster approaching two dozen, the club engages in a number of public service, educational, and charitable activities. These activities include operation of portable model train layouts in about half a dozen Connecticut and Massachusetts events each year.

The current effort, with its New England industrial theme, replaces the 1990 version of the layout. It is larger, and includes more than just material and equipment replacements. Some of the upgraded features include a double-crossover, an operating quarry, an operating drive-in theater, and a large number of both kitbashed and scratch-built structures. The operating Niantic River bascule bridge has been replaced by a larger Scherzer rolling liftbridge.

In the next article, we will feature the home layouts that will be open on the layout tour. See you at the Convention.
O SCALE WEST

18th Annual Meet
Thur. - Sun. February 7-9, 2008

Hyatt Regency Santa Clara
5101 Great America Parkway
Santa Clara, CA 95054
800-233-1234

Thursday Feb. 7: videos, layout visits, clinics
Fri.-Sat Feb. 8-9: sales/exhibits, contests, layout visits, etc.
Sunday Feb. 10: layout visits

Registration: $25 individual or family, $30 after December 31
Table Rentals: $35 each, $45 each after December 31

To receive a newsletter with all the details send an LSSAE to:

O Scale West, Dept. 2R
876 Boyce Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301-3003

See [http://www.oscalewest.com] for the latest on the meet,
and to download the newsletter and the registration form.
Buy-Sell-Trade ads are $5 for 30 words plus your address information. Additional words are $0.25 each. Subscribers are permitted one free ad per subscription cycle. All B-S-T ads are prepaid. You may send ads by postal service with a check or money order. Ads sent by email or called in must use a credit card. See our contact info on page 2.

WANTED: Custom-built or scratchbuilt N&W G1, W, V, M, M2, or K1 classes of steam locomotives. Contact Joe Giannovario, PO Box 289, Exton PA 19341 or call 610-363-7117.

VAN BUREN, ARKANSAS. Area’s newest hobby store from Z to O, new and used. Visit Dave’s Hobby Shop at 600 Main St in the Anhauser Busch Building or online at [www.daveswebshop.com], 479-471-0750.

LAYOUT FINISHING SERVICES:
Experienced modeler with 40+ years experience will enhance your scenery and structures on your layout, from new construction to renovation of your existing layout. Portfolio/references available on request. Bonded. Serving the Northeast. John Schaub, Railroad Model Scenery Studios. Email [railroadmodelscenery@yahoo.com], phone: 516-946-6880.

WANTED: Joe Fischer pass. and head-end cars. PSC and Amer. Hvywt 10 sec. Pullmans. Walthers Erie coach, RTR only. ATSF double vestibule combine, kit or RTR. What have you? Mail only please. Jim Seacrest, PO Box 6397, Lincoln, NE 68506-0397.

FOR SALE: On30 Bachmann rolling stock, unused, in original boxes. 2-6-0 (painted and unlettered), six Colorado & Southern freight cars, and two Colorado & Southern coaches. SASE for list. Myles Gray, 11454 Mother Lode Circle, Gold River, CA 95670-3042.

FOR SALE: O Scale craftsman kits, over 20 years old, in original boxes. Freight cars by Main Line Models, Amloid, All Nation, Suncoast, Quality Craft, Korber building kits. SASE for list. Myles Gray, 11454 Mother Lode Circle, Gold River, CA 95670-3042.

FOR SALE: Original Central Locomotive Works EM&GP 35 all-brass kit. Still in original cartons, never assembled. Two Pittman motors, high and low noses. Jim Frierson, 225 Springwater Dr, Columbia SC 29223, or email [jfrierson@earthlink.net].

FOR SALE: 2-Rail O Scale locomotives. MTH NYC Hudson $450; C&O 2-6-6-6 $950; Weaver PRR K4 $450; UP 4-8-4 $750 OBO, plus shipping. All new TRO. Brian Martin, 330-823-7761.

FOR SALE: Linde-Union tank Liquid Argon F/P (OMI#80017) $600; PSC SP 4-6-2 F/P (#2467) $2300; GP G-3 4-8-4 U/P (OMI TRO w/new larger Pittman motor) $2500; two SP 2-8-0 (PFM and Glacier Park); ATSF 4-6-4 May Gray (custom paint & drive by Doug Cockey) $2750. Best offers considered. Contact: bantell@pacbell.net or 650-347-4402; Bruce Antell, 50 S San Mateo Dr, Ste 105, San Mateo, CA 94401-3857.

January 2008

19-20: Lehigh Valley Train Meet: two day train show at Merchant’s Square Mall, 1901 S 12th St., in Allentown. Admission: $5, children under 12 free. Tables: $15. Contact Valley Rail Promotions, PO Box 64, Copley PA 18037, 610-440-0487.

19-20: Plano, Texas
23rd Annual Dallas Area Train Show at the Plano Center, 2000 E Spring Creek Parkway. Sat.: 10 AM to 5 PM; Sun.: 10 AM to 4 PM. Admission: $7 per person, children under 12 free. Contact bbbart@sbcglobal.net

26: LaCrosse, WI
Great Tri-State Rail Sale: all scales, equipment and accessories. Railroad antiques and memorabilia. Books, magazines, supplies, diecast models and more. Admission: $4, children under 12 free. Held at the LaCrosse Center, 300 Harborsview Plaza, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. For more info phone 608-582-4761.

February 2008

7-10: Santa Clara, CA
18th Annual O Scale West. There will be over 200 tables, Favorite Model and Photo contests; O and S Scale layouts operating on site, door prizes, clinics, movies and videos, and self-guided visits to the 30+ O and S Scale home and club layouts in, and adjacent to, the San Francisco Bay Area. Cost: Family admission (includes spouse and children under 16) is $25 for the event ($30 after December 31, 2007); no single day rate. Selling/display tables are $35 each ($45 after December 31, 2007). For a free 4 page newsletter, send an LSSAE to: O Scale West, 876 Boyce Avenue. Palo Alto, CA 94301-3003.

March 2008

14-16: Arlington Heights, IL
Chicago O Scale Meet: The Chicago O Scale Meet is a 3 day gathering of vendors, customers, clinics, and fun held annually on St. Patrick’s Day weekend in the Chicagoland area. Hundreds of vendors gather to buy, sell, and trade their products to the open public. This is the Chicago O Scale train show you’ve heard of. Anything the O Scale enthusiast could want to find or buy will be found here. Dealer setup on Friday, 14th, 4:00 to 9:00 PM. Registration fee: $20. Tables: $55 before 1/31/08, $60 after. Contact: marchmeet@sbcglobal.net, or call 847-401-4333 or 847-823-1719.

July 2008

The 2008 National O Scale Convention will be held at the DCU Center in Worcester, Massachusetts. The DCU Center will provide us with over 50,000 square feet of exhibition space. In this large area we plan to have a large amount of dealer tables, wide aisle spacing and many operating layouts including the Southern New England Modular Layout that measures 27’ x 81’.

The DCU Center is located in downtown Worcester about 2 blocks from the newly renovated Union Station. Click on the Union Station link to see more about the station. One of the Providence and Worcester mainlines runs across the street from the front of the DCU Center.

An all day railfan trip is planned for convention goers on Wednesday 7/23/08.
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A Changing of the Guard

Welcome to 2008, our seventh year of publishing OST. Those of you who scrutinize each issue from cover to cover may have noticed a change in the masthead. That ain’t Scace’s mug in the Editor’s slot. Starting with this issue (#36), Brian Scace retires from the Editor’s chair and Mike Cougill (our current “Fine Scale” columnist) succeeds him. Mike and Brian worked together editing this issue, and I expect Mike to take on issue #37 solo. Brian will also take a break from his column duties, but he has assured me he will be available for reviews, promised to submit articles, and will generally stay in touch. I hope to coax him back into our regular writers’ fold sooner rather than later.

No one should read anything into this change that isn’t there. Brian and I have been talking about this for a while. He wants more time with his son (and to play with his trains, rather than just write about them). I agree and I don’t begrudge him the desire to back off from the magazine.

Brian has made an indelible mark on O Scale as Editor of OST. I value not only his contributions to the magazine but, even more so, his friendship. I learned much from him. We made some great decisions about what the magazine should be and where it should go. Thanks, Brian, for all you’ve done for OST! Mike, you have some large shoes to fill.

There are other changes in this issue as well. We are dropping Bobber’s “Narrow Minded” column. Bobber has been with OST from the beginning, and his contributions have been greatly appreciated. However, I have come to the conclusion that we have little or no base among O Scale narrow-gauge modelers, not even On30. We never get any mail about narrow-gauge modeling, nor do we get any articles. I’m sure the Gazette and other specialty pubs have it well covered. I thank Bobber for his support when I needed content to start up OST, and I’ve made sure he has a lifetime subscription to the magazine.

Which brings me to the next item, traction. I felt the same way about traction that I do about narrow-gauge: we had little base in our readership. Then came Gerald Brothers’ letter and I relented, sorta. Starting with the next issue (#37) Roger Parker will alternate his “Traction Action” column with in-depth book reviews. Roger has been cranking out mini-reviews on the OST Blog for some time now, and I feel he should take a shot at longer reviews for the magazine. So, if you are a traction modeler and you want us to keep “Traction Action” as a regular feature, let me hear from you, pronto. It will help a great deal if you offer a traction modeling article or two, as well.

Brian, Mike and I have discussed where we ought to take OST in the next few years. We want to continue to feature high-quality O Scale modeling that pushes the envelope. To that end, Mike (who is involved in Proto48) has asked some of his contacts to submit articles about their work. I expect we are going to see some amazing modeling articles coming from them.

I, personally, am also interested in having some basic articles that will entice the “ready-to-run” crowd into trying their hand at some model building. I am also pushing for more articles on exploring DCC for O Scale. I am convinced that DCC is “ready for the masses” in O Scale. The only real remaining barrier to widespread adoption is the receivers, and that is changing. I have commissioned a comparison article on DCC decoders suitable for O Scale, both with and without sound. I hope to bring that to press by the May 2008 issue.

3-Rail Scale vis-a-vis 2-Rail Scale

There has been a clamor online about the need for a 3-Rail Scale forum. Putting aside the semantics of “3-Rail Scale”, if you run three-rail trains and you want your models and layout to look more O Scale than O Gauge, then all you have to do is adopt some (if not all) of the standards of O Scale 2-Rail.

One gentleman online was complaining about how a recently imported set of plastic full-length passenger cars were uncoupling and derailing on his three-rail layout. When questioned by others, he revealed his curves were O-81 (For us two-railers, that’s a 40-1/2” radius). Most every experienced two-rail modeler from N Scale to O knows that you can’t expect to run full-length passenger equipment “out-of-the-box” on curves that sharp, at least not without either some modifications to the cars by the owner or compromises in fidelity by the manufacturer.

Now, I am not suggesting you need to join the NMRA, although that would be a good start as they have a book of Standards and Recommended Practices that you get with your membership. At the very least, however, get the bible of track-planning, John Armstrong’s Track Planning for Realistic Operation, and start from there. You will learn just about all you need to know to build a fine operating O Scale layout. And you would have learned that 46” radius curves (O-92) are barely adequate for full-length passenger equipment.

Scale Versus Toys

That line of thought brings me to manufacturers who make both 2-Rail and 3-Rail. I feel that some of our O Scale models are being “dumbed down” because the 3-Rail nostalgia train market is much larger than the 2-Rail side of the house. I also think that our Hi-Rail (3-Rail Scale!) brethren feel the same way as the 2-Rail modelers. Top speeds are too high, low speed control is sacrificed, gaps between trucks and carbodies are too large, and the list goes on and on.

Manufacturers, listen up! O Scalers, both 2-Railers and Hi-Railers, want scale models, not toys that zip around at 120 smph! There is a great market out here for correct scale models and, trust me on this, it doesn’t cost any more to do a model correctly than to do it incorrectly. We’re willing to help you get it right the first time. All you have to do is ask.

Keep Highballin’
On perhaps the greatest railroad ever, no steam locomotive was more revered than the legendary Pennsylvania K-4s Pacific. Evolving from a program begun in 1914 to develop heavy freight and passenger classes utilizing common boiler designs, the K-4s was an instant success. From 1917 to 1928, a total of 425 units were built at the Juanita and Baldwin Shops.

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