

THE

S

RESOURCE

NEWS, REVIEWS, INFORMATION TO USE

October/November 2023

Volume 10 No. 1

SCALE

*Let's Build
Something!*

**Time to Build Something: Sumner-Plant House
Old School Style - Looking at Vintage S Scale
New Tracks Featuring S Scale Modelers
New Tracks My Build
And So Much More...**



9TH
ANNIVERSARY

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October/November 2023

Volume 10 No. 1

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

Front Cover Photo

Early morning coal tower. A beautiful scene on James Spice's Sn3 model railroad.

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The Model Railroad Resource, LLC publishes *The O Scale Resource* and *The S Scale Resource*. Be sure to look at both of our magazines. There are many articles in our magazines that are not scale specific and will be of interest to you. Click the magazine title in this announcement to see the magazine.

From the Publisher's Desk



Fall is here and many of us are heading back to our train rooms to pick up projects we left since summer began.

It's hard to believe that this is our 9th year of publishing *The S Scale Resource Magazine*. I was talked into it at the time knowing we would have others filling content. "The Best Laid Plans of Mice and Men!"

We are still here, and as a model railroader I feel it's important for a scale to have it representation. I know there are some out there that see all and know all and tell me we're not needed and they don't read our magazine. Yet these people still manage to know what's in the issue when they Email me complaining about something. That being said, we'll keep doing what we do and try to bring new layout, project and modeling features to you.

As always, we would like to hear from you. What are you working on, what's the state of your layout, what's in your future? Send me an Email (daniel@modelrailroadresource.com) and let's talk.

With all the buzz lately about AI I thought I would ask a few questions and see what AI had to say. It turns out AI's answers are like most politicians, obvious, vague and not substantial. No breakthroughs here...

SSR: What is the state of S scale model railroading?

AI: *S scale model railroading, also known as Sn3½ or Sn3, was a niche but active and dedicated community within the model railroading hobby. S scale models are built to a 1:64 scale, which makes them larger than HO scale (1:87) but smaller than O scale (1:48).*

Here are some key points about the state of S scale model railroading up to that time:

Diverse Community: *The S scale community includes a diverse group of modelers, from those who focus on scale modeling to those who prefer toy-like layouts. The community is known for its friendly and supportive atmosphere.*

Limited Availability: *S scale models, track, and accessories can be more challenging to find compared to more popular scales like HO or N scale. However, several manufacturers produce a variety of S scale products, and some enthusiasts also engage in kitbashing and scratchbuilding to create custom pieces.*

Narrow Gauge Focus: *Many S scale modelers are particularly interested in modeling narrow gauge railroads, especially those in the 3-foot gauge range. This allows for more realistic layouts in smaller spaces.*

Digital Technology: *Like other model railroading scales, S scale has seen advancements in digital technology, including DCC (Digital Command Control) systems and sound-equipped locomotives.*

Online Resources: *There are online forums, social media groups, and websites dedicated to S scale model railroading where enthusiasts share their layouts, ideas, and experiences.*

Regional Variations: *The popularity of S scale can vary by region and country, with some areas having more active S scale clubs and layouts.*

Please note that the state of the hobby may have evolved since my last update in 2021. I recommend checking more recent sources, visiting S scale model railroad conventions or exhibitions, and joining online communities to get the latest information on the current state of S scale model railroading in 2023.

SSR: Which is more popular S scale or S gauge?

AI: "S scale" and "S gauge" are terms that are often used interchangeably in the model railroading community, but they can sometimes have slightly different meanings depending on the context. In general, both terms refer to a model railroad scale that is 1:64 in proportion. However, the popularity of these terms may vary by region and among different model railroading enthusiasts.

S Scale: This term typically refers to the scale ratio of 1:64, which is used to represent standard gauge railroads. S scale modelers aim for realistic modeling of standard gauge trains, buildings, and scenery. S scale often includes both two-rail (prototypical) and three-rail (toy-like) systems.

S Gauge: S gauge can sometimes refer specifically to the American Flyer brand of model trains, which were popular in the mid-20th century. American Flyer trains were often produced with a three-rail system and were known for their toy-like appearance and playability. Some enthusiasts still use "S gauge" to refer to American Flyer-style trains.

In summary, "S scale" is a broader term encompassing various aspects of modeling standard gauge railroads in 1:64 scale, while "S gauge" can sometimes refer more specifically to the American Flyer style of modeling within that scale.

In terms of popularity, it can vary by region and personal preference. Some model railroaders in the S scale community focus on prototypical modeling, while others may have a nostalgic fondness for American Flyer-style trains. The popularity of each may depend on the interests of individual modelers and the availability of products and resources in their specific area.

SSR: What is the future of S scale?

AI: Predicting the future of any niche within the model railroading hobby, such as S scale, is challenging. The future of S scale model railroading will likely depend on several factors:

Market Demand: The future of S scale will be influenced by the level of demand for S scale products and accessories. If there is a sustained interest among model railroaders in this scale, manufacturers may continue to produce new and improved S scale offerings.

Technology Advancements: Like other scales, S scale may benefit from advancements in technology, including more sophisticated DCC (Digital Command Control) systems, improved locomotive sound, and realistic scenery materials.

Innovation: Innovation in the S scale community, such as the development of new modeling techniques, layout designs, or integration with digital modeling tools, can contribute to the scale's growth and vitality.

Community Engagement: Active and engaged communities of S scale modelers can help sustain and promote the scale. Clubs, forums, exhibitions, and social media groups play a significant role in connecting enthusiasts and sharing knowledge and inspiration.

Product Availability: The availability of S scale products, including locomotives, rolling stock, track, and scenery items, can have a significant impact on the scale's future. If manufacturers continue to produce a variety of products, it can attract new modelers and sustain the interest of existing ones.

Educational Outreach: Efforts to introduce model railroading, including S scale, to new generations of hobbyists through educational programs and events can help ensure the scale's continued relevance.

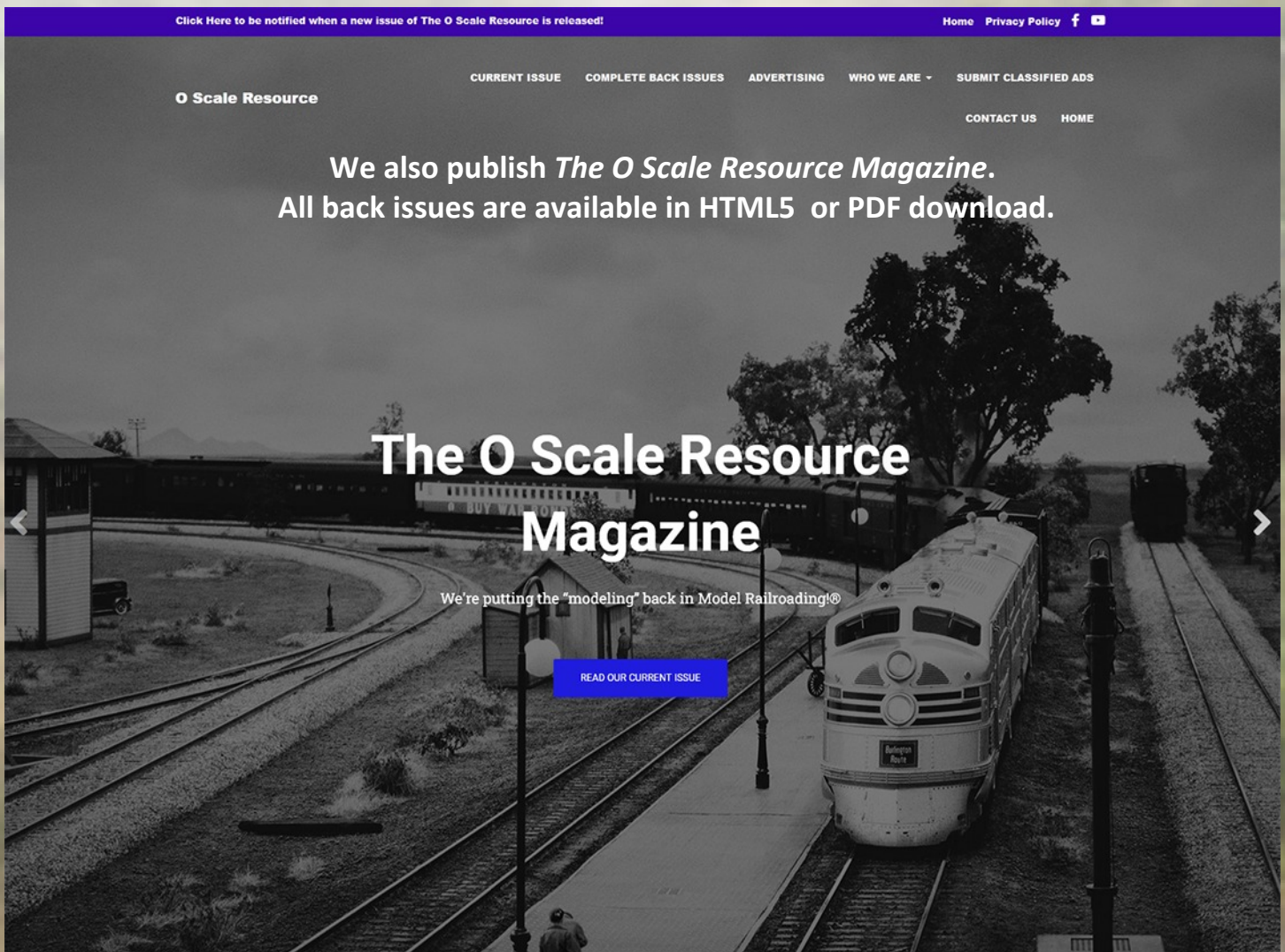
It's important to note that while S scale may be a niche within the model railroading world, niche communities can be quite passionate and dedicated. The scale's future will depend on the collective efforts of modelers, manufacturers, and enthusiasts to promote and sustain interest in S scale modeling.

To get a more up-to-date perspective on the future of S scale model railroading, I recommend connecting with S scale clubs, attending S scale exhibitions or conventions, and engaging with online communities dedicated to this scale. This will provide you with insights from those actively involved in the hobby and help you stay informed about any developments or trends.

Well, that was exciting. I guess I'll stick with talking to real people for a bit longer.

Happy Reading & Happy Modeling,

Amy & Dan Dawdy



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NEWS YOU CAN USE



Nick from [ITLA Scale Models Inc.](#) has two new models in both S scale and O scale.

S & O Scale "Brick Utility Building". Use this 1 Story Brick Structure line side as a Ground Level Utility Building, a Yard Office, or even on a structure's roof top as an HVAC Mechanical Room / Elevator Head House. Laser engraved & cut in MDF wood with Laserboard windows & trim. All brick walls with "saddle-style" chimney

"Tight Fit" corners Separate Window Sills for ease of paint Laser engraved brick "returns" within window & door openings, Window & Roof "vents", Roof Top Access Ladder. Colour instruction sheet with paper caution signs Easy to assemble. Sample model shown was painted with "rattle can" matte/flat coloured spray paints, and weathered with Acrylic washes!

Dimensions: S scale - 2 5/8"L x 2 1/8"W x 2"H
O scale - 3.5"L x 2 3/4"W x 2 5/8"H



S & O Scale "2 Story Brick Utility Building". Use this 2 Story Brick Structure line side as an Interlocking Tower, a Yard Office, a Ground Level Utility

Building, or even on a structure's roof top as an HVAC Mechanical Room / Elevator Head House.

A versatile 12ft x 15ft Two Story Brick Utility Structure measuring approx. 3.5"L x 2.25"W x 3.75"H. Laser engraved & cut in MDF wood with Laserboard windows & trim.



All brick walls with "saddle-style" chimney, "Tight Fit" corners with brick detail, separate window sills for ease of masking / painting, laser engraved brick "returns" within window & door openings, roof top access ladder, beautifully detailed 2nd Story access Staircase and more.

Colour instruction sheet with paper "caution" signs. Easy to assemble. Sample models shown were painted with "rattle can" matte/flat coloured spray paints, and weathered with Acrylic washes!

[Please see the ITLA Scale Models website for more information and Detail Kits.](#)

The [Bristol S-Gaugers](#) are celebrating their 75th Year Anniversary milestone by offering B&M Quad Hopper cars featuring the "Minuteman" herald which are being produced by American Models. These car models will be available with three different car numbers (8000, 8248 and 8323). These numbers are from the March 1929 and February 1930, range from 8000-8999. The original 1929 quad hoppers were later "re-shopped" with the "Minuteman" herald from the 1940's.



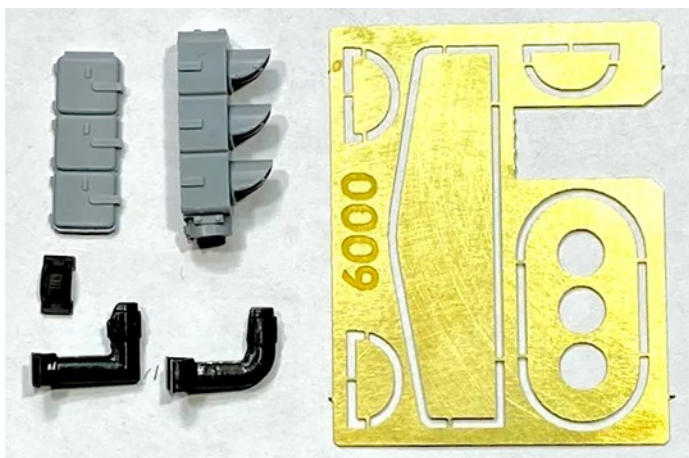
Each car number will be available in both scale and high-rail. Due to limited quantities, we reserve the right to fill orders for either one or two cars with car numbers of our choosing. Orders for three cars will receive all three car numbers. Cars are \$55 each, plus shipping. Photo above is very similar to production car.

OFFER GOOD WHILE SUPPLY LASTS (Only 162 total cars available)

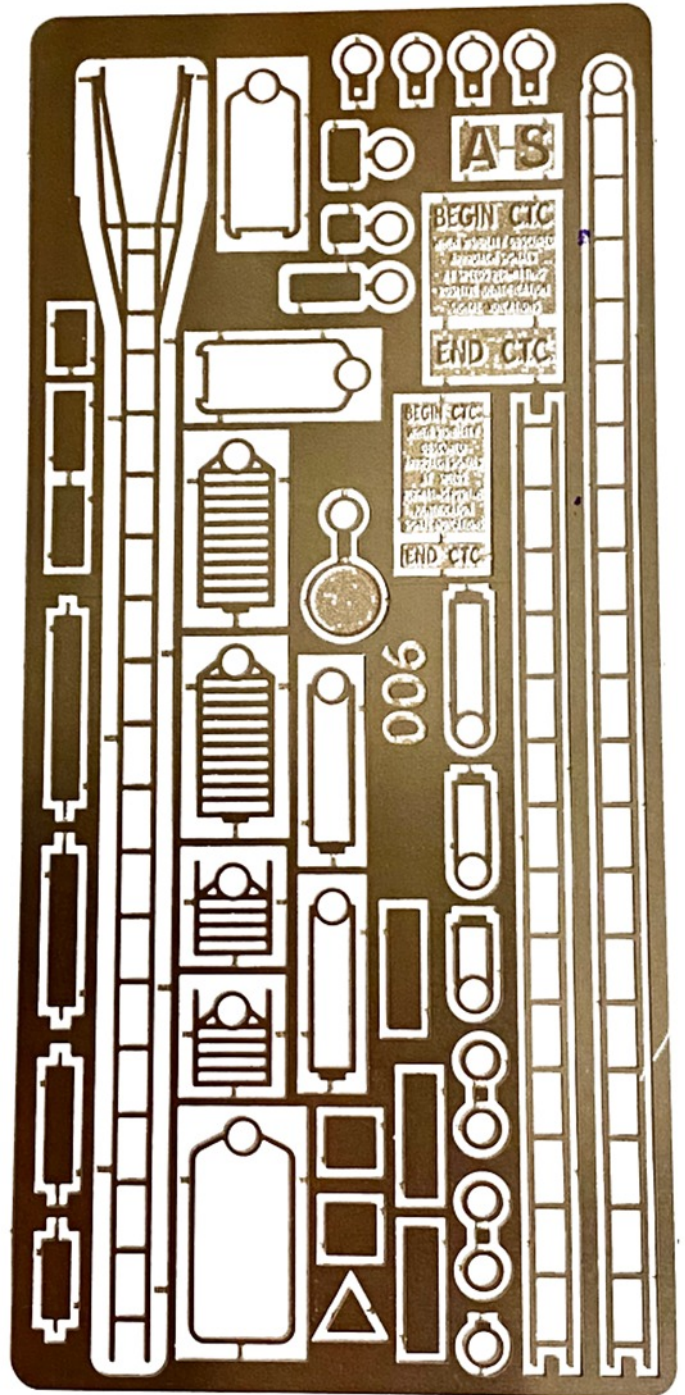
Go to bsgr.us to download and print the Order Form.



Walter Vail from [Showcase Miniatures](#) sent us a note. "Hello... While we primarily design kits in N, HO and Z Scale, we were asked to produce our



colorlight signal kit in S Scale. The signal head is designed to accept 3mm LEDs, but others can be used as well."



They also have photo-etched signal details stainless and nickel. [Check all their S scale parts here.](#)



[Scott from Tru-Color Paint and Phoenix Precision Models](#) has some new products and an introduction to their Phoenix Precision Models line.

Here is the new product information for Tru-Color Paint and Phoenix Precision Models for October-November, 2023. The sets comprise six (6) 1-ounce paint bottles of either all sprayable or all brushable paints (for now, anyway.)

I don't think we have introduced Phoenix Precision Models to you, yet. My bad; so, let me rectify this right now. Phoenix Precision (PPM) models is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tru-Color Paint. Phoenix Precision Models produces 3D printed detail parts & models in N-, HO-, S-, and O-Scale.) We introduce new products every quarter; the smaller N- and HO-scale items will be out at the beginning of the quarter, and the S- and O-scale items will be available in the middle of the quarter.

In conjunction with PPM, TCP is releasing a set of 3D printer paints that are specifically designed with enhanced adhesion promoters for the resins that comprise most 3D printed and cast resin objects. We have tested these paints on (approximately) a dozen different resins (and combinations) to make sure the paints adhere correctly.

These paints reflect generic colors; they aren't specific to railroading, ship, plane, armor, or car modeling. We do have some specific railroading paints that we have put in a combination of adhesion promoters to bind to 3D printed engine shells and rolling stock bodies.

Current 3D-Printed and Cast Resin Paints, 2023

1. 5001: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Red
2. 5003: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Orange
3. 5005: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Yellow
4. 5008: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Green
5. 5011: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Blue
6. 5014: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Purple
7. 5016: Glossy, Sprayable White
8. 5017: Glossy, Sprayable Black
9. 5018: Glossy, Sprayable Light Gray
10. 5019: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Gray
11. 5022: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Sand
12. 5026: Glossy, Sprayable Medium Brown
13. 5029: Glossy, Sprayable Red-Orange
14. 5032: Glossy, Sprayable Natural Wood
15. 5037: Glossy, Sprayable Aluminum

Current Phoenix Precision Models Objects in S-Scale, 2023

1. 32000: 20' Container Construction Office
2. 32005: Lowboy Trailer with Hitch
3. 32010: Mid-Dozer
4. 32020: Road Grader
5. 32510: uploaders
6. 32515: Closed Dumpsters
7. 32525: Tall (or Full) Pallet Stacks, Assortment (of 4)
8. 32527: Single CHEP Pallet
9. 32535: Crate Stacks, Assortment (1 Each: Single 3' Cube Crate, Type 1, Type 2, and Type 3 Crate Stacks)

October, 2023

Railroad

1. 4203: Grand Trunk Western- Red-Orange
2. 4204: Bessemer & Lake Erie- Orange

Structure/Infrastructure

1. 459: Matte Boxcar Brown

3D-Printed and Cast Resin

1. 5010: Glossy, Sprayable Light Blue
2. 5028: Glossy, Sprayable Off-White
3. 5036: Glossy, Sprayable Cherry Red

Paint Sets

1. 11011: New York Central
 - 043: Jade Green
 - 129: Light Gray
 - 130: Dark Gray
 - 221: Freight Car Red, 1945-1960'
 - 268: Pacemaker Red
 - 269: Pacemaker Gray
2. 10302: 2008-2012 Mercedes-Benz, Set #1
 - 656: Platinum-Bronze Pearl
 - 658: Emerald Green Pearl
 - 661: Carnelian Red Pearl
 - 791: Chromite Black Pearl
 - 792: Sandy Beige Pearl
 - 793: Indium Gray Pearl

Phoenix Precision Models

1. 32025 Compressor Trailer
2. 32500: 7' Brick Wall- Full Length
3. 32501: 7' Brick Wall- Half Wall

4. 32502: 7' Brick Wall- 90-Degree Corner
5. 32503: 7' Brick Wall- 135-Degree Corner
6. 32504: 7' Brick Wall Capstones- Flat and Regular
7. 32505: 7' Brick Wall Capstones- Angles and Regular
8. 32506: 7' Brick Wall Capstones- Flat, 135-Degree Corner
9. 32507: 7' Brick Wall Capstones- Angled, 135- Degree Corner
10. 32508: 7' Brick Wall Column Capstones- Flat and Angled Set
11. 32509: 7' Brick Wall Column Capstones- Sphere
12. 32540: Tire Stacks- 4 Tires in the Stack

Please check their Website for all these and other exciting products!



Mini Prints has some new Halloween items.

Vampire: A miniature model Vampire in his coffin.



Decorate your layout for Halloween this year with a miniature GIANT Spider a black cat and an Undead Zombie emerging from the earth.



November, 2023

Railroad

1. 4200: San Diego Coaster- Dark Blue
2. 4201: San Diego Coaster- Teal Blue
3. 4202 San Diego Coaster- Gray

3D-Printed and Cast Resin

1. 5004: Glossy, Sprayable Light Yellow
2. 5009: Glossy, Sprayable Dark Green
3. 5024: Glossy, Sprayable Beige

Paint Sets

1. 12002: Passenger Cars, Set #1
 - 054: Pullman Green
 - 225: Interior Cream
 - 226: Interior Pink
 - 227: Interior Light Tan
 - 228: Interior Light Green
 - 229: Interior Light Blue

Paint Sets

1. 10406: Metals, Set #1
 - 354: Galvanized Steel
 - 355: Dark Aluminum
 - 356: Semi-Matte Aluminum
 - 396: Metallic Burnt Iron
 - 412: Matte Steel
 - 774: Metallic Tin

Phoenix Precision Models

1. 32015: Excavator/Backhoe
2. 32530: Skylight- 0-Windows Out
3. 32545: Food Service Counter
4. 32541: Individual Tires

Waiting: This set includes 3 pieces: a sitting skeleton, a suitcase, and railway platform seats.



Checkout all the cool new products on their Website.

McCarville Studios announces some new products.



The Placerville Post Office: The prototype Post Office sat behind the Rio Grande Southern depot in Placerville, CO. The structure had several businesses as tenants after the post office moved to another nearby location. The structure still stands today. Kit has a removable roof and laser cut parts.

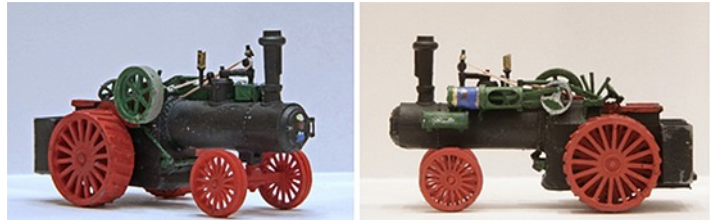


The S Scale Resource October/November 2023

MCS-2029 Flour & Feed Warehouse: This kit requires you to provide your own corrugated material for completion. Warehouse sat behind the Placerville depot, and next to the RGS warehouse. Also known as 'Warehouse B' in some publications. Can be built as 2 separate warehouses at the roof line change seam. Laser cut walls, roof, doors, etc. Board by board loading dock.

See their Website for more information.

James Regier's Models has some new Steam Traction Engine kits available. Based on many photographs of a 30 HP model that was built in 1910, and still serves today in agricultural exhibitions. This is a highly detailed 3D-printed kit, available in various configurations. Each kit includes detailed instructions for assembly, with full color prototype photos.



See his listings here on Google Docs.

B.T.S is offering a 34' Truss Rod Vat Car. This early tank car was inspired by an early drawing for one that ran on the Central Pacific around 1880. The sparse documentation stated it was used in oil service. Technically, any liquid could be transported, such as mineral water heading to the bottling plant. This was before the time of air brakes and other safety features. The car featured link & pin couplers when built.



The model consists of laser-cut wood and cardstock components with hardware in plastic and brass. Less trucks and couplers - Wizard Water Works decals are included. Athearn O scale Archbar trucks are shown on the model.

Oh, yea, the Wizard Water Works bottling plant is being built now. There needs to be several of these vat cars on the line to service the plant's needs.

[See the B.T.S. Website for more details.](#)



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S-Scale- 1:64





S-Scale

PPM-32020	Road Grader
PPM-32025	Compressor Trailer
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PPM-32501	7' Tall Brick Wall- Half Wall (2)
PPM-32502	7' Tall Brick Wall- 90° Corner (2)
PPM-32503	7' Tall Brick Wall- 135° Corner (2)
PPM-32504	Brick Wall Capstones- Flat and Regular (8)
PPM-32505	Brick Wall Capstones- Angled and Regular (8)
PPM-32506	Brick Wall Capstones- Flat, 135° Corner (4)
PPM-32507	Brick Wall Capstones- Angles, 135° Corner (4)
PPM-32508	Brick Wall Column Tops- Flat & Angled (7 Ea.)
PPM-32509	Brick Wall Column Tops- Sphere (7)

They're Here! Phoenix Precision Models, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tru-Color Paint, is releasing seven (7) new 3D printed accessories in N-, HO-, S-, and O-Scale for your modeling pleasure. These detail parts and vehicles are 3D printed in gray resin, and come with the supports off the model. They are available now from your local retailer, or you can purchase them directly from us. Let us know what you think; or, if you have a suggestion for what to do next, email or call us; we are always available to talk to modelers like you.

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The S Scale Resource October/November 2023

TIME TO BUILD SOMETHING

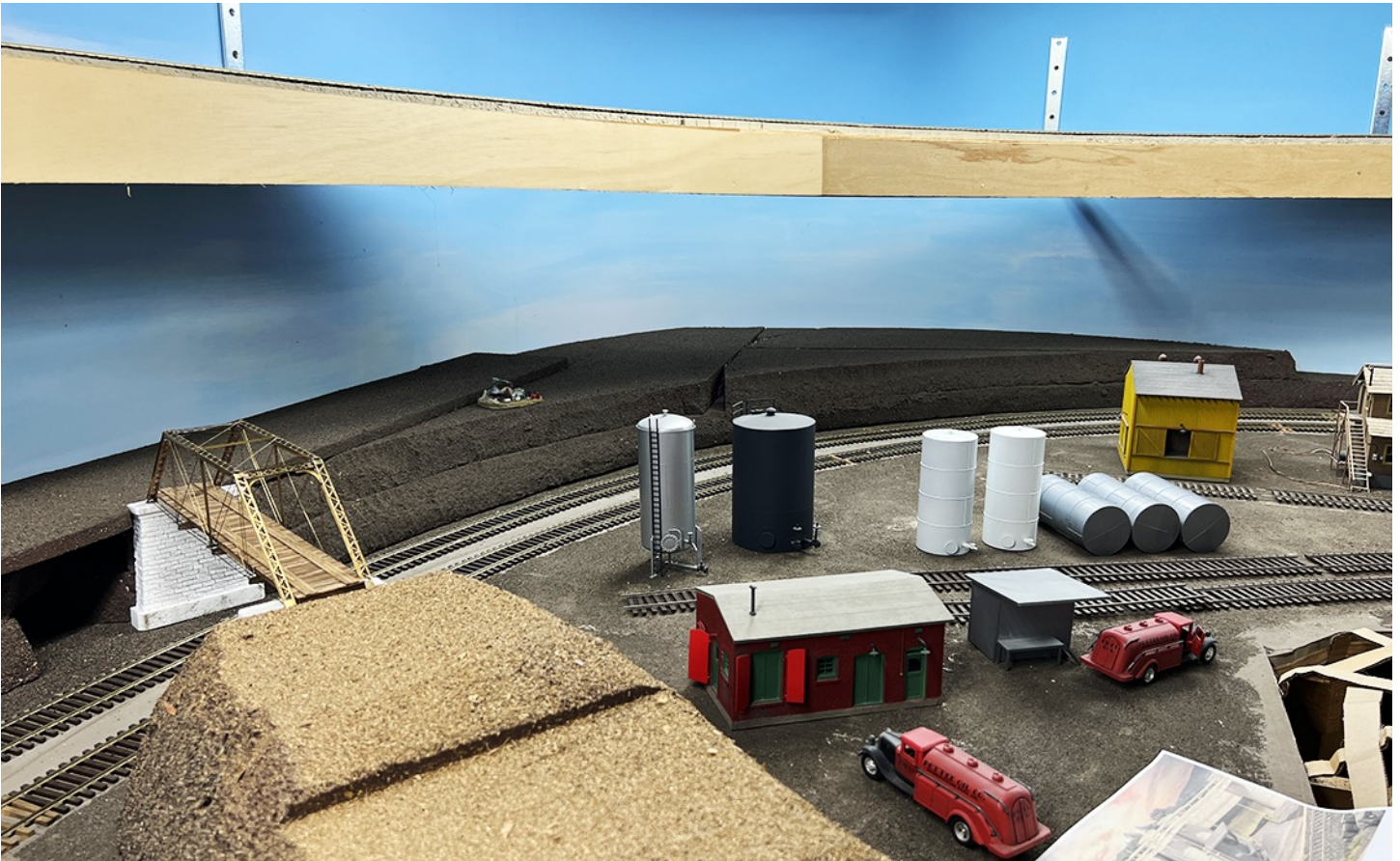
BY DAN DAWDY

Sumner-Plant House

By banta modelworks

Or, Do As I Say, NOT As I Did!

[Last time](#) we built an easy kit for a background model. To recap, while Amy and I were at the 2022 NASG convention I had bought a few building kits to bring back home for friends and myself. “What?”, I hear you saying, “You are an O scaler!”. Yes I am, but I have a new area I am working on where I think S scale will fit the bill. As you can see in the picture below it’s a long way back to the sky from the front fascia, and I thought what a great place for some forced perspective. So I am going to try a few S scale buildings back there.



A new scene with an old one lane bridge crossing over the double track main and industrial area in front.

In the [last issue](#), we built the Long Bell Skid Shacks from [American Model Builders](#). Now it’s time to move to something a bit larger and more complex. Before we begin, I am building this as a background model. I normally add interiors and lighting to all my O scale models. Since this will sit so far back, I am not going to worry about that. Please keep that fact in mind while I go through the build as there may be many things you might do differently to add detail.

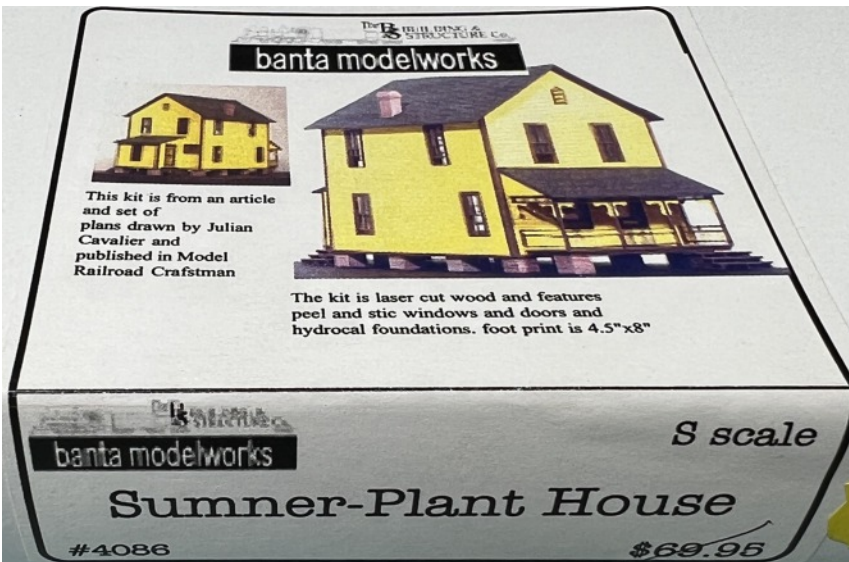


This is a nice looking house that would fit well in my 1947 era Tennessee layout. It's based on plans by Julian Cavalier and published in *Model Railroad Craftsman*.

The Tools

Nothing to special here. Hobby knife with new blades, 1-2-3 blocks, squares, tweezers, emery boards and sanding stick. I like the thick double sided emery boards as you can cut them to fit into small areas. Also a drill for the hole in the roof for the smoke jacket, micro applicator brushes for gluing and wood glue.

Since the last build, I bought some small containers to hold the glue so I don't have to work with the gallon bottle at the bench. Yea, I know, I should have thought of this in the beginning.



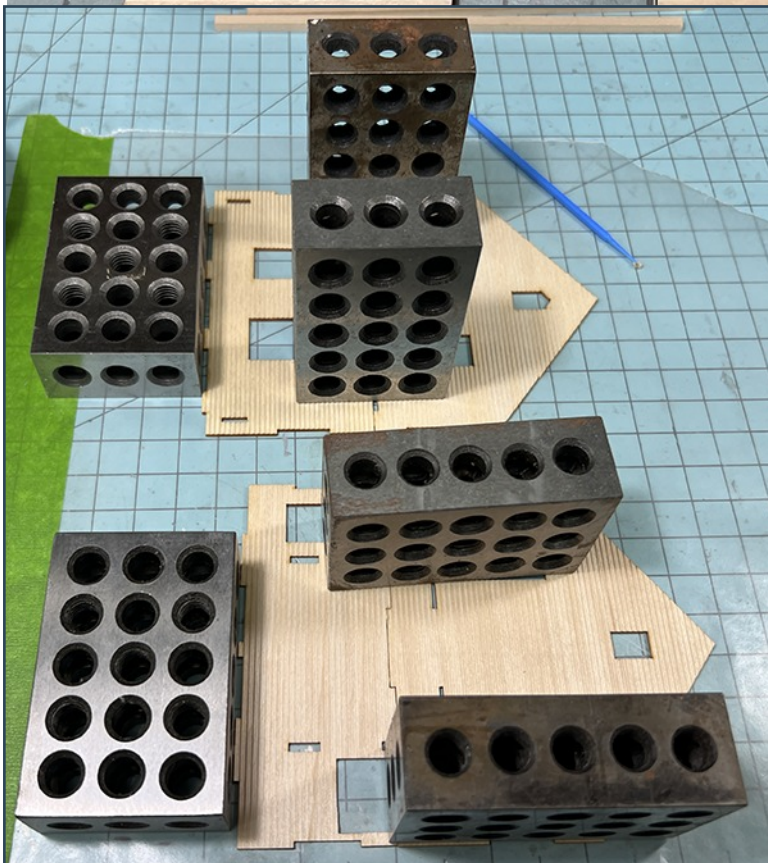
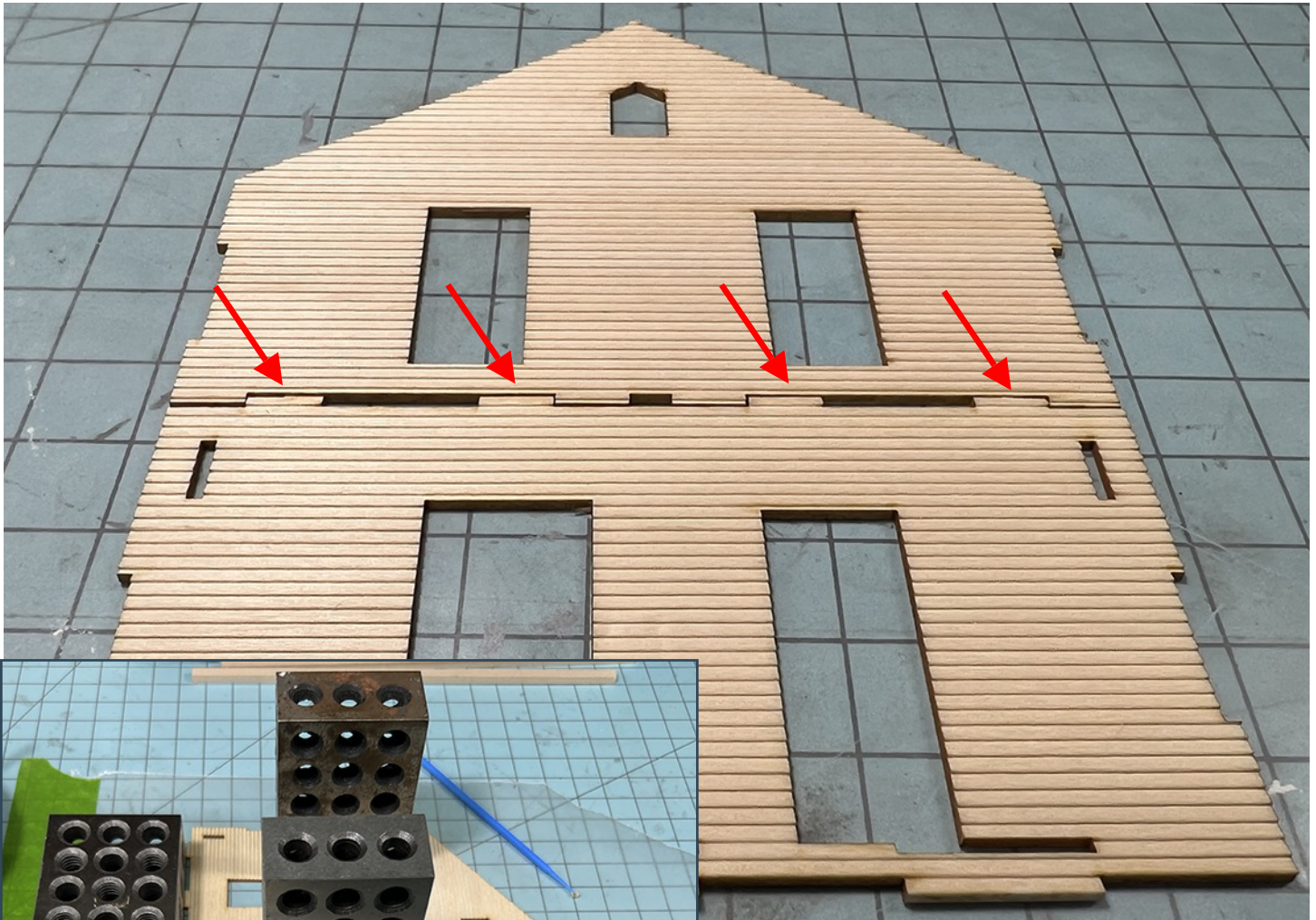
Notice also that I put wax paper on the bench top so when I am gluing (i.e. the sides of the building to the base) I don't have to worry about the parts sticking to the bench.

In The Box

All the parts are bagged and well labeled. As you remove parts from their

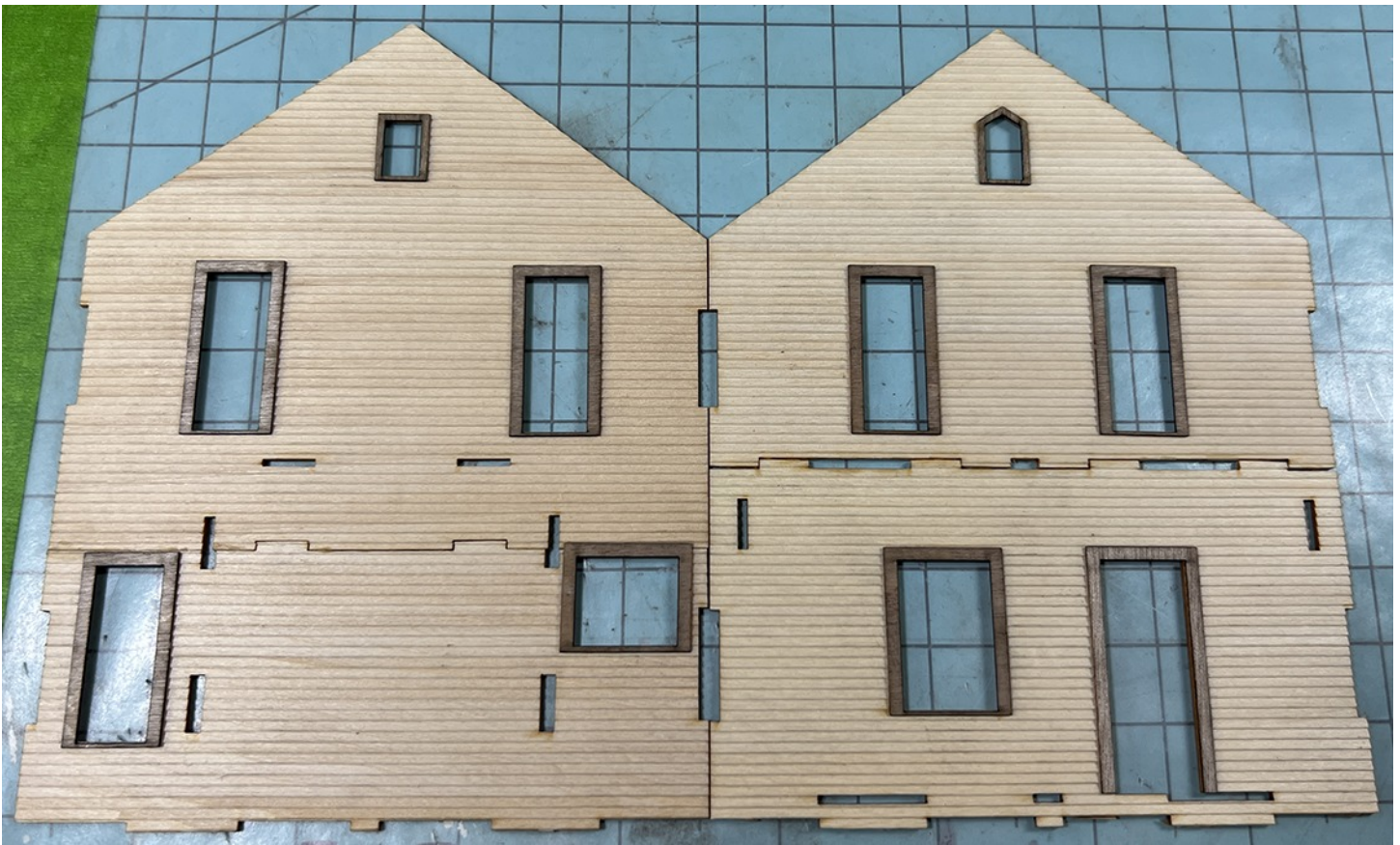
respective bags, leave the other parts inside as it makes it easier to find things. Three pages of instructions along with color elevation drawings are a big help.

Let me say that I really messed up and did not paint this before assembly. That was a mistake and it caused me some trouble down the line. **You really need to follow the instructions and read all the instructions before the build.** If you use water based paints, it's best to paint both sides to reduce warping, or better yet, spray the parts. OK, let's begin. Start with the main walls. Be sure to lightly sand all tabs so they fit snug as shown with the arrows.



Once fit, I used 1-2-3 blocks to hold the parts down while waiting for the glue to dry. Remove the laser cut windows and doors and gently sand the sides to remove the area that was attached to the carrier. Again, I stress, these should be painted or stained before. Do as I say and not as I did...



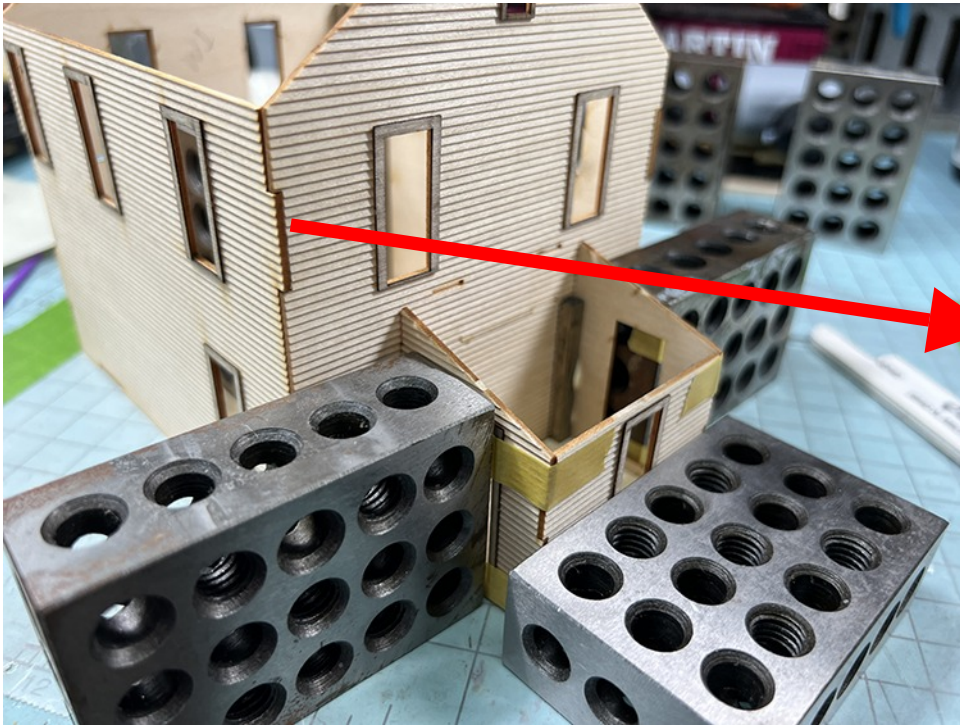


Above we have our front and rear walls ready. The sides are done the same way. At this point, assuming you did paint things, you should install the inside window sash and glazing. I left this until the end, but it's much better if you do it now. The drawings in the instructions are very well done and extremely helpful.



I used 1-2-3 blocks to keep things square and true as I glued the sections together. I also added scrap wood as bracing in the corners to maintain a square corner and add strength.





Once that was completed, the back shed or bump out was added.

At this point I saw a problem and I was not a happy camper. The tabs extended too far past the walls. I

would have thought that would have been accounted for in the cutting, but apparently not. So, before assembling the walls, make sure to sand these tabs so that they are flush. Doing this to an already assembled building was a pain.



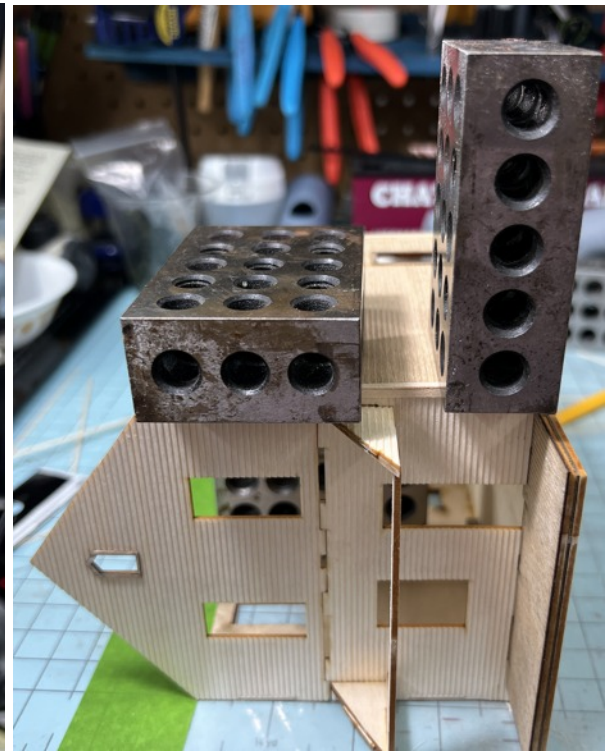
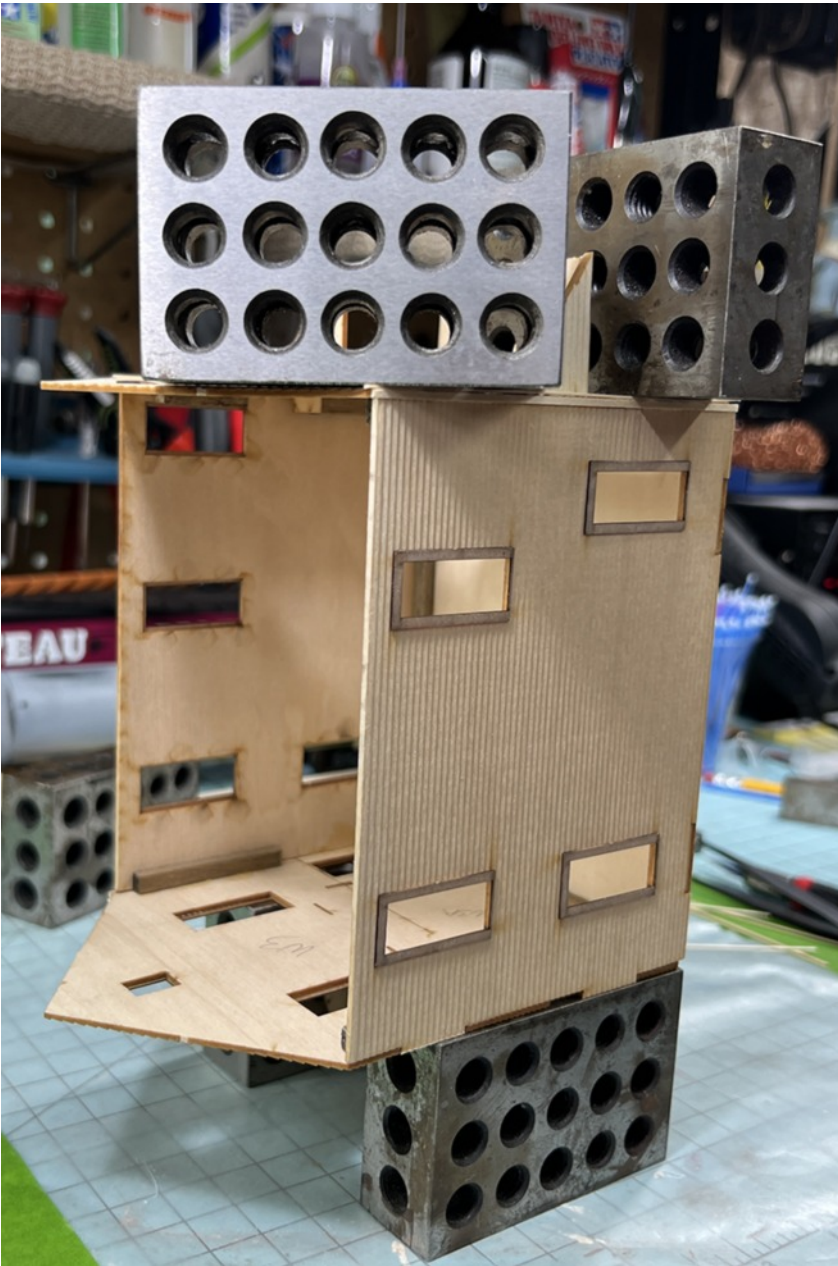
Now we come to the porch assembly. There are three supports for the roof and two pieces that make up the floor. Refer to the instructions as again the drawings are very well done.

Here was my next screw up. (Note to Dan, read everything even the drawings...) There are four angled supports, but as clearly stated in the drawings, one set is NOT used. I glued them together and used them all. It kind of worked, but don't do that! The "U" shaped support then slides into slots and attaches to the angle supports.

For the porch floor, the S scale kit uses the two wood floor supports and then a cardboard one on top. Add the decking and then the whole assembly will slide into the slots on the front of the building.

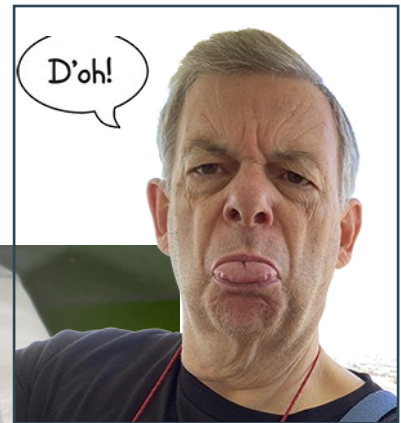


The instructions now say to add the porch railings, but I thought that was going to be a bit delicate and decided to add all the corner trim first.

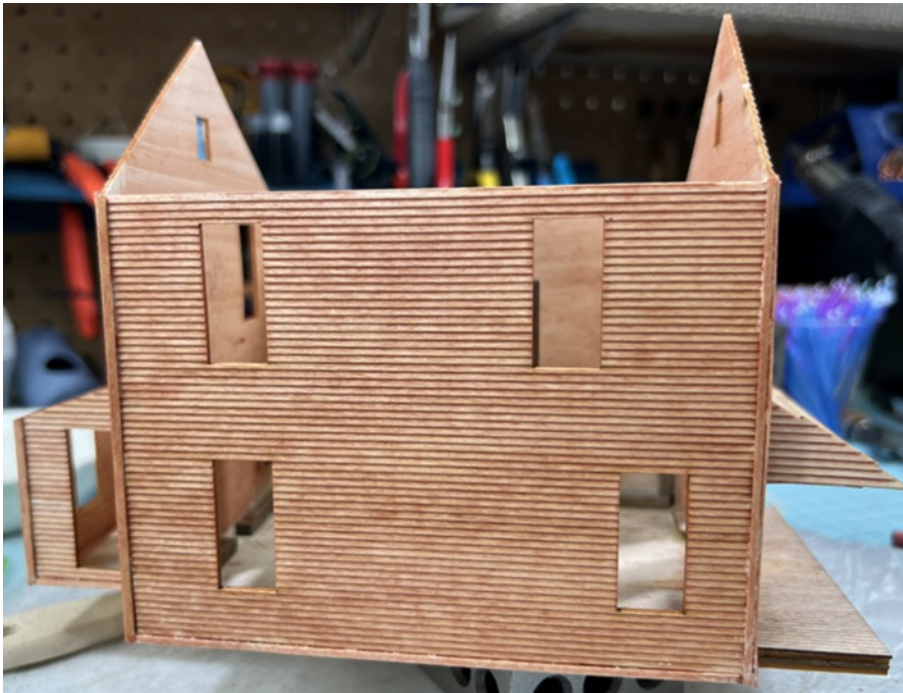


I am sure there are more graceful ways to do this, but it worked.

I now painted the doors and inside windows which I should have already done and put them on. Also, it's so much easier to do this while still attached to the sprues.



You will notice that I removed the outside window and door frames as I wanted them to be white. That's why you don't see them in the next series of images. At this point, I painted the walls using a wash of Vallejo paints. Notice I said wash, meaning water. I did both the exterior and interior to help with warping. As you can see, that went well.



So, back to the scrap box and more supports along with my cluster of a system for holding things until the glue dried. Please feel free to poke fun at all of this, I can take it.

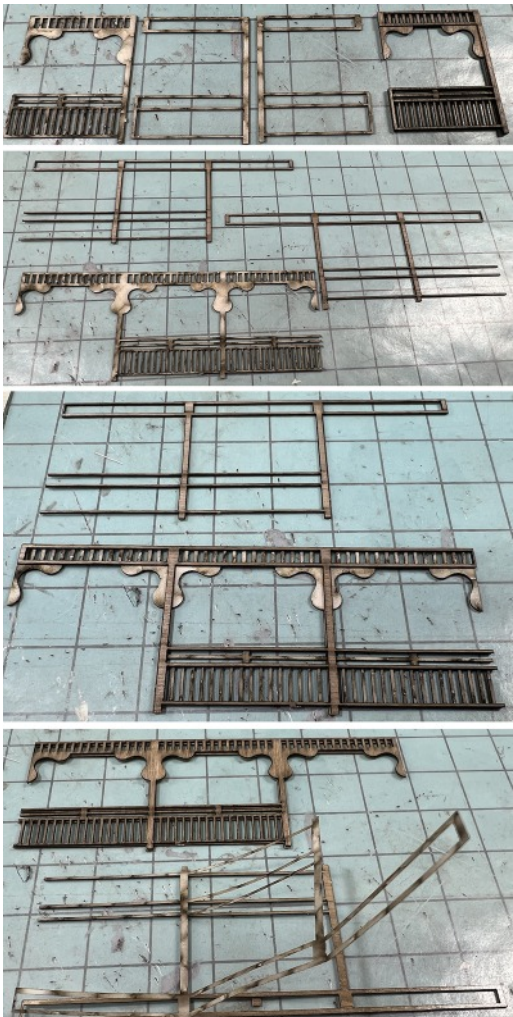
While this was drying I found some shingle sheets from JTT that I had. The kit comes with shingles, but I wanted to use something easier and less time consuming. So this is what they call shingles??? Looks like brick to me, but whatever...



I used 3M Supper 77 to attach to the cardboard roofs.



The images above show the test fit before applying the “bricks”. Next, the porch railings were assembled and placed on the model. This is a really nice touch and really makes the building pop.



Below is as far as I got. Other jobs, paying jobs, got in the way, but I'll finish next time. I can still hear laughter, but that's OK. I made a lot of mistakes, mostly of my making, not the fault of the kit or it's instructions. But if you are a beginner, you too may make make mistakes and I want to show you that all is not lost.



At **B.T.S.**, 2023 Means . . .

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174 O Scale Kits,

5 TT Scale Kits,

And more than a few hundred Detail Parts.

Currently, there are over a dozen new kits in development for release this year!

Oh, yea, I recently published two **Military Crime Novels**. Writing #3 now.

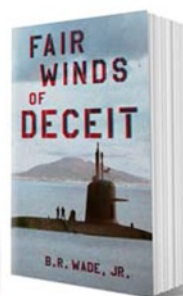
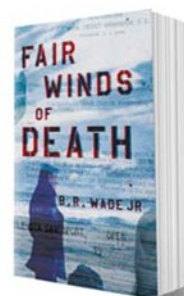
Yep, I've been busy! Thanks for keeping me that way!!

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S Scale...Old School Style Looking at Vintage S Scale

By Carey Williams

Email author by clicking on their name.

World War Two forced all the large train manufacturers into war production work. Model Railroading and Model Craftsman were busy fanning the flames for the promise of new products once the guns ceased firing. All gauges vied for attention to attract new followers. The newly named "S" gauge was no exception and many ads promised wonderful things for the emerging 3/16 scale world.

May 23, 1950

W. J. SCOTT

2,508,691

METHOD OF MANUFACTURING PROTOTYPES

Filed May 20, 1946

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

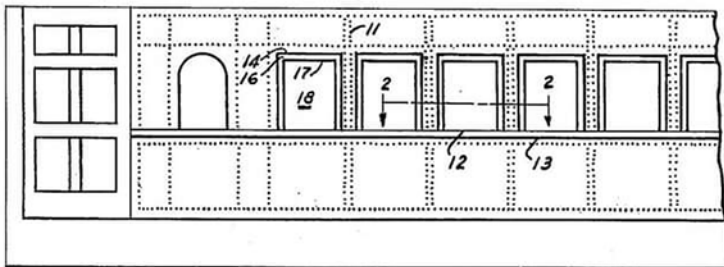


Fig. 1

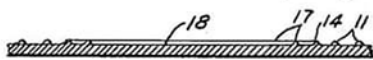


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

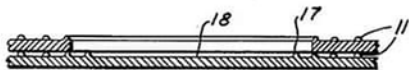


Fig. 4



Fig. 5

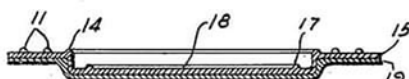


Fig. 6



Fig. 7

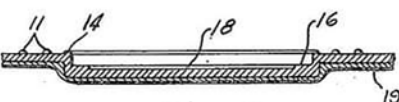


Fig. 8

Walter Scott of Portland, Oregon developed a unique process of molded copper passenger car sides for his Exacta Models filing for a patent May, 1946. Scott wanted to cover all bases offering in HO, OO, S and O both 17/64 & 1/4") scales. The Exacta flyers are rich with passenger cars both heavy weight, old wood styles and streamlined designs, several trolleys and a caboose. Exacta's offerings were very ambitious for a small startup company.



Exacta S scale 1946

Walter J. Scott
INVENTOR

BY *E. A. Bushman*
ATTORNEY

"EXACTA"™

TRADE MARK

MOULDED COPPER CAR SIDES IN ALL GAUGES

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Manufactured by
"EXACTA" Scale Models, Inc.
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 Portland 11, Oregon

"Exacta" car sides are made for the model railroader who is particular about his pike. They're moulded of lustrous copper, with infinite detail, depressed windows and doors... rivet detail within 90° of the prototypes. Developed by Walter J. Scott... "Exacta" is the answer to every model railroader's prayers... surpassing anything on the market today.

The molds available are pictured in this circular... but our highly skilled craftsmen are constantly working to build for the Model Railroader the latest cars in use on all lines. We will advise you when they are completed. Special orders will be accepted for special sides providing you furnish drawing or photographs giving every detail.

PRICE LIST

On Sidings Illustrated Below

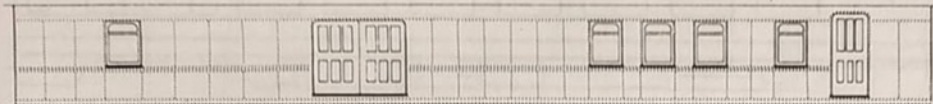
We reserve the right to change prices without notice

17/64 — on special order

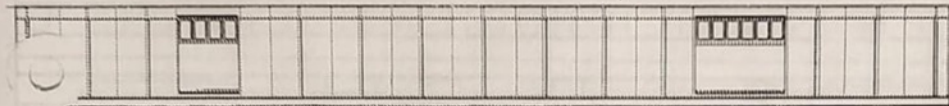
Mail orders filled promptly... sample sent for \$1.00 to apply on first order.

PATENT APPLIED FOR

COPYRIGHT 1946 - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



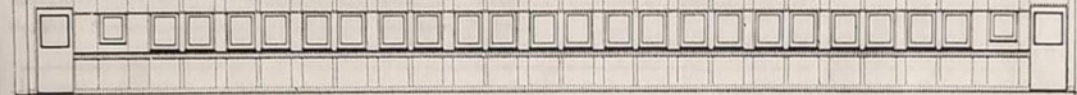
No. 500 — Combination Baggage, Postal Combination Car — Available in "O," "S," "OO" and "HO" Gauges



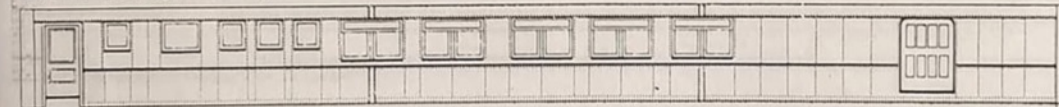
No. 501 — Express-Baggage Car — Available in "HO," "OO," "S" and "O" Gauges



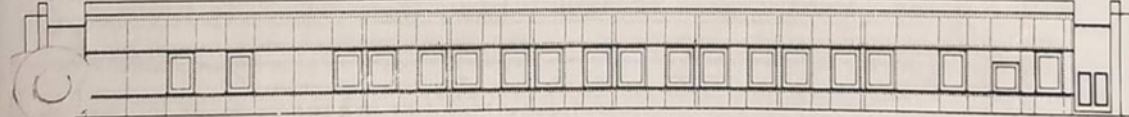
No. 100 — Standard Day Coach — Available in "O," "OO," "S," and "HO" Gauges



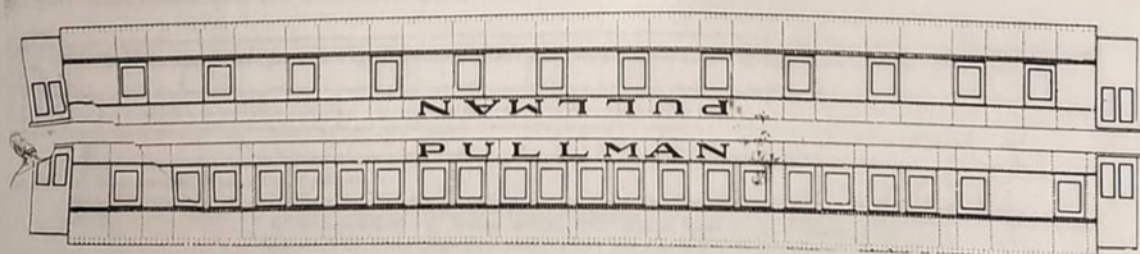
No. 102 — Pennsylvania Day Coach — Available in "O," "OO," "S," and "HO" Gauges



No. 104 — Standard Club Car — Available in "O," "S," "OO" and "HO" Gauges



No. 200 — Pullman Standard — Available in "O," "OO," "S" and "HO" Gauges



No. 201 — Pullman Standard — Available in "O," "OO," "S" and "HO" Gauges

ALL
 PRICES
 ON
 SEPARATE
 SHEET

SEE OTHER SIDE

Ben Nixon, premier cheerleader for all things S gauge with his NIMCO catalogs, offered the Exacta S scale sides in his first catalog in 1947... including wood bodies to complete the cars. This was to be the only year Exacta cars were offered by NIMCO.





Photo shows a comparison with the Exacta S scale car to a truncated in length for sharp radius track American Flyer car.

Unfortunately, very little of the pent up demand from the war years for new product turned into die hard 3/16" S scale modelers. There were a few die hard 3/16" fans, but not enough to sustain many of the new little startup companies.



Photo of Exacta O scale kit for visual of sides as offered ready for the enthusiastic modeler to put together.

Exacta was sold mid 1947 moving to San Francisco, California changing the name to Central Lines and dropping OO & S gauges due to a very small demand. The sides are real copper... think shiny penny! The back of the Exacta sides are possibly a rough zinc, and commonly rubber stamped "Exacta".

With the loss of Exacta in the S scale world, Sylvania and Chester would fill the void for S scale streamlined cars... but it would be a much longer wait for scale heavy weights to enter the S scale world again.

Cheers Carey Williams
(click to email Carey)

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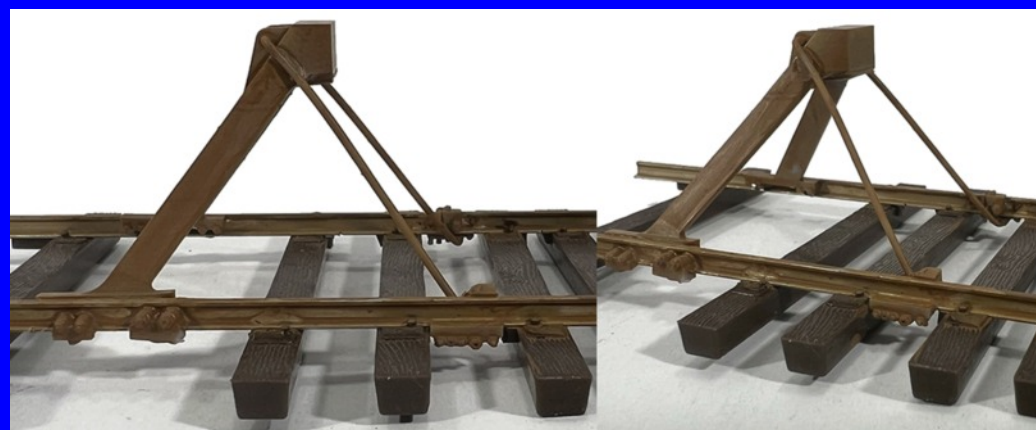
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NEW TRACKS MY BUILD

Edward O'Rourke - edwardorourke1@me.com - HO - Here are a couple of refrigerator cars I scratch built. First one is 1940's post-war paint scheme, second is 1930's. This is an Ambroid "Watermelon car," one of the cars I built to get my "Cars" AP award. I built it pretty much as it came in the kit, adding only brake lines and detail, new wheels and couplers, cut levers and brake hoses. I would have liked to model it with the ventilator door in place, but I couldn't come up with any non-edible item to use for HO scale watermelons.



Jeff Jordan - jordan.jordan54@verizon.net - O - 3D printed sheep. Located in Colorado. Bachmann stock cars. Black car modified with Evergreen styrene and San Juan parts/decals.



NEW TRACKS MY BUILD

Gary Shurgold - gshurgold@gmail.com - HO - Pickle grading station. Rice kernels used for pickles. Vats are stamp rolls. Road trailer built to resemble a pickle car.

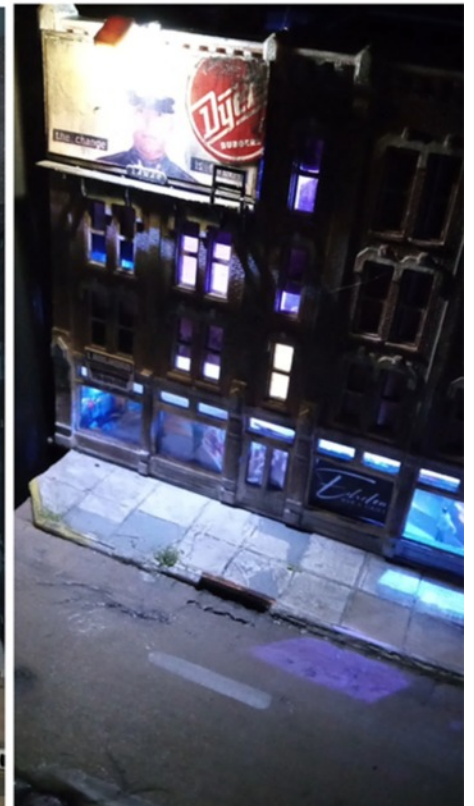
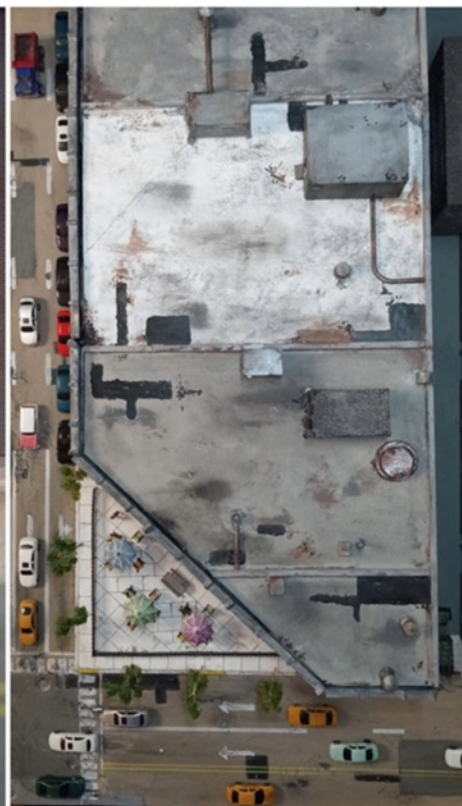


James Spice - coptercptn@gmail.com - Sn3 - Stock loading (sheep) in Deadwood on my "Denver & Cat Canyon Western". Pens were kitbashed/scratch built. Light poles scratch built using 0402 LEDs. Across from the livestock loading is the pasture/holding pens.



NEW TRACKS MY BUILD

Mitch Lovelace - lovelacemitch@gmail.com - N - I also live on the 19th floor so it was easy to check out rooftops as well. Did my best with the lighting just so you guys could have something to visualize, but I will be doing Woodlands Scenics Just Plug systems for the street lights and interior lights, as well as, stop lights. Signage is from local businesses around my home, and the structure itself was a get bash from three DPM hotel structures, as well as, some scratch built pieces for the roof and the back walls.



NEW TRACKS MY BUILD

Phil Edholm - pedholm@pkeconsulting.com - O - The build of an agricultural freight depot and supporting infrastructure.



NEW TRACKS MY BUILD

Left: Phil Edholm - pedholm@pkeconsulting.com - O
Continuing the build of an agricultural freight depot and supporting infrastructure.



Below:

David Rarig - rdgengineer@gmail.com - N - Both buildings are paper. It's always mid October on my Reading & Northern N scale layout. Farmer Brown is contemplating how best to lift his rather large squash harvest into his pickup truck so he can move them across the street and into the barn. The barn and farmhouse are made from printed cardstock paper; scenery is done with ground foam and static grass with Woodland Scenics fence and tree armatures below.

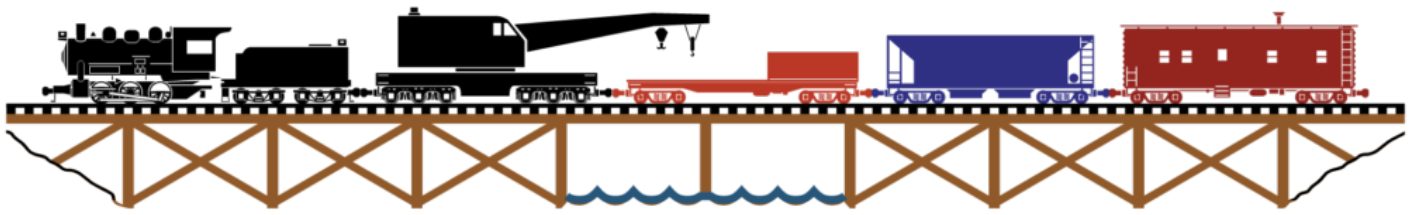


NEW TRACKS MY BUILD

Greg Cassidy - gcassidy2@verizon.net - HO - Medford Trains Mail Pouch Barn. A metal roof was added, complete with ferric chloride aging to induce rust.



NEW TRACKS MODELING



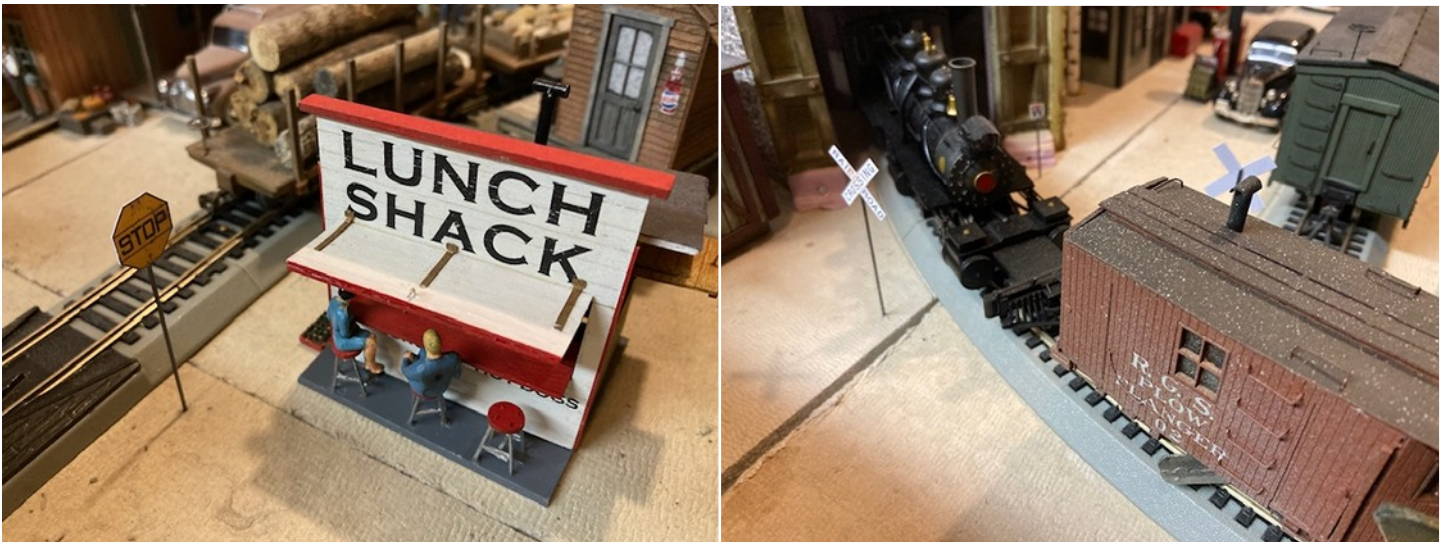
By Contributing Editor Jim Kellow MMR

MODELING WITH MENTORING FROM TALENTED MODEL BUILDERS AND EVEN FROM MODELERS IN OTHER HOBBIES



Tennessee Valley Custom Model Signs Contest Drawing Winner

This Tennessee Valley Custom Model Signs Contest Drawing was published in a previous article in this magazine. The winner was Scott Zieske. Scott used the W (whistle) and crossbuck; and stop signs. He said they were very nice products. He sent these two photos showing the signs. Congratulations Scott – glad you like them. Thank you Rick Barton owner of Tennessee Valley Custom Model Signs for your help and interest. Please visit his website and see all his signs: <https://tennesseevalleycustoms.com/>



Please Follow my [Facebook Page Jim Kellow MMR](#) for Breaking News about New Tracks Modeling. Something new is always happening for modelers like you.

Subscribe to our website newtracksmodeling.com to get all the current information about our future Zoom shows and get a weekly email with the log in links for our Zoom shows. Or you can join us live on our YouTube channel, New Tracks Modeling, or watch the videos of our past shows. We have over 1,000 videos available.

MENTOR DEFINITION: A TRUSTED COUNSELOR OR GUIDE

New Tracks Modeling Monthly Newspaper Column is Helping Us Reach Out to a New Audience About Model Railroading

In my last article, I told you I am doing everything I can think of to promote model railroading modeling and mentoring. [Click here to see my August 9, 2023 newspaper article in the “Live and Learn” section.](#) Many of us are true artists and don’t even know it! Worst of all, our beautifully constructed creative modeling is not recognized by the art community.

Wouldn’t it be great to have articles by model railroaders in newspapers all over the country? What a boost it might give our hobby. What great past childhood memories of model railroading might people think about and restart their model railroad hobby?

I hope many of you will write articles for your own local newspaper. If they are like my newspaper, they will be glad to hear from you. I tried to get the Associated Press to offer my articles to other papers, but no luck since I am not a full time employee of a newspaper. So it is up to all of us to spread the word about our fantastic hobby.

Today’s Model Railroading Community Made The Inaugural 2023/24 New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship Successful: “Thank You All”

Thanks to members of the model railroad community, we’ve successfully raised donated funds to pay for the first year of our New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship program. Also it is very exciting for us to have received very impressive applications from young modelers. Thanks again to everyone who contributed to make all this possible, including all the organizations and businesses who supported our program. We had seven modelers submit applications and while we could only award one scholarship this first year we have encouraged all the applicants to reapply for next years’ program.

Announcement of the New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship Winner for 2023/2024

To see this announcement live, please join us on our New Tracks Modeling show August 30, 2023 at 7pm Eastern Time. If you need a Zoom login link send me an email to: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com or you can watch it live or the video of the announcement later on our New Tracks Modeling YouTube Channel.

Bob Davidson, Chairman of the New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship Committee, and I are extremely pleased to introduce the winner of our \$1,000.00 2023/24 Scholarship:



Ethan P. Bernstein

Ethan has completed his sophomore year at Johns Hopkins university with a 3.74 GPA. He is an active member of the Baltimore, MD Area N-Track Club (BANTRAK). He writes:

“I am an N-Trak and T-Trak module owner and builder. I help with setup and teardown of layouts at local train shows, including the Great Scale Model Train Shows at Timonium, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum, and displays, and run trains for public viewing. I also frequently contribute to the club’s monthly newsletter with modeling articles and reports from rail-fanning.”

Ethan is a NMRA member where he serves on the Conformance and Inspection department specializing in N-scale equipment. He also writes reviews for the NMRA magazine. He is a talented modeler as evidenced by the two photos he included in his application:

For more information about Ethan, please read the short essay he included in his Scholarship application:

“A love of tiny things. I have always been drawn towards the smaller things in life - literally. When given the option of what to buy, I would always choose the smaller item, whether it was a pocket-sized dump truck over the rideable version, or the smaller scale train over the larger size.



My interests with tiny things directly correlate with my interests in machines and engineering, where I find the cool, most complex machines to be those that are the most compact, such as the workings of a diesel engine, where lots of different small parts are required to generate immense amounts of power. This love of “tiny things” was what called me to model railroading.

When I discovered model trains in elementary school, I was immediately enthralled by the ability of such a small electric engine to haul tens of freight cars, just like the real thing. I was also amazed by the detail that could be stuffed into such small models, and the compactness of the drive mechanisms inside the locomotives. I decided to pursue N-scale modeling, one of the smallest scales of model trains, with a proportion of 1:160, meaning a diesel locomotive that in real life is 72 feet long, is a mere 5.4 inches in N-scale.

To increase my knowledge base in the hobby, I purchased and subscribed to several model railroad magazines, went to model train shows, and even joined a local model train club, known as Baltimore Area N-Track, or, more commonly, BANTRAK.

I write articles for the club’s monthly newsletter in which I describe how I constructed a certain model from scratch parts. For example, how to make a detailed, scale-sized model airplane or train car from cheap and readily available materials like matchsticks and paper, so that other members of the club could make similar models of their own or learn from the techniques I use when building a certain type of model or working with a certain material.

My love of tiny things and my desire to have a positive impact on those around me has guided my interests in materials science, and more specifically, nanomedicine. I discovered nanomedicine when I embarked on a research project my sophomore year, searching the Internet for a compelling topic until I finally found something which suited my interests: a tiny medical treatment with a huge impact.

Nanomedicine encompasses various forms of microscopic drug delivery platforms to treat various diseases and conditions. I was again captivated by another “tiny thing,” this one with the potential to cure a problem as

widespread as cancer, and instantly knew nanomedicine was the right topic for me. I have been researching nanomedicine for three years, pursuing my passion for “tiny things” in a way that could greatly benefit others.



My nanomedicine research has guided me to the field of oncology, prompting me to learn about cancer physiology as well as the workings of different systems in the human body at a cellular level, expanding my ever-growing knowledge of super tiny things. In addition to my nanomedicine research, I have also begun investigating an even newer “tiny therapy” called immunotherapy, which, similar to nanomedicine, works at the microscopic level to fight diseases. At age eight, I would never have guessed that my new hobby of tiny model trains would lead me to later conduct research that could have a life-changing impact on people across the globe. Sometimes the most unexpected and impactful things in life are those that are the smallest.”

Thank you Ethan for submitting your application and sharing your model railroading experience and educational goals with us. I know that all of our model railroad community wishes you great success in your future education, your professional career, and your future model railroading. We believe you have a very bright future ahead of you and appreciate this opportunity to provide some financial help as you continue to work toward your goals. Best wishes in all your future endeavors.

To say I am proud and thankful for all the support and hard work put in by so many modelers who helped make our first year Scholarship program a great success is an understatement. However, I personally want to thank all the New Tracks Modeling volunteers whose hard work and dedication made this scholarship possible. Special thanks are given to our volunteer Scholarship Committee: Bob Davidson, Chairman, Jeff Jordan, attorney, and members Phil Edholm and Kevin Macomber. It goes without saying we also owe a debt of

appreciation and thanks to the model railroaders whose financial contributions made it possible to reach our first year's goals. Rick Barton, Chris Course, Greg Cassidy, Pat Rivard, Bob Davidson, Bill Grierson, Fr. Ron Walters, Jeff Zibley, David Menard, Greg Wart, Scott Geare, Dan & Amy Dawdy, Kevin Macomber, David Schultz, Jeff Zibley, Henry Primas, David Vaughn and Larry Price.

Finally, I want to thank the volunteers who exhibited our promotional banners around the country, and the organizations who allowed us free space at their events, including the Amherst Train Show, the Great Scale Model Train Show in Timonium, the O Scale National convention, the Association of Professional Model Makers, the National Retail Hobby Stores Association, the numerous local and regional events, and those organizations that publicly supported our efforts including local clubs and NMRA Regions and Divisions. Thank you all. We greatly appreciate the support from both the model railroad community and the broader hobby community including the Hobby Manufacturers Association, the National Retail Hobby Stores Association, and the Association of Professional Model Makers. Thank you all so very much.

New Tracks Modeling is the only volunteer group of model railroaders who, as far as we know, is offering a National STEAM scholarship program funded by volunteer donations from today's model railroad community. We encourage local clubs and other organizations to join with us to expand our efforts.

We believe our young model railroaders deserve all the educational help we can give them so our hobby will continue to have outstanding leadership to guide our hobby into the future.

To learn more about volunteering to help us, and/or to donate to the 2024/2025 New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship, please visit newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship.

Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Last issue I thanked Atlas for their support and now, I want to thank the NMRA for their Facebook posts of support for New Tracks and our scholarship program. This Appeared on Facebook from the NMRA.

NMRA - National Model Railroad Association tagged you in a post.

Jim Kellow MMR and NMRA member, is looking for students interested in applying for a scholarship sponsored by his New Tracks Modeling shows. If you know someone, please share this with them. For more information on Jim's weekly shows or the scholarship, please use the QR code or visit <https://newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship>. #NMRAExperience #NMRAFamily



In addition, the other day I got the GSMTS, Timonium Show, report from Scott Geare, that he sends to all the show participants. Scott included the following comments about our Scholarship Program. Thank you Scott for your help and interest.

“ I write to all our exhibitors, whether or not you were present at our February 4th and 5th Great Scale Model Train Show (aka “The Timonium Show”).

“*JIM KELLOW and the STEAM SCHOLARSHIP: You know what “STEM” stands for, don't you? Of course you do: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. That's the current emphasis of the national educational agenda. But what does “STEAM” stand for? Same thing, with the addition of “ART.”*”

“*Jim Kellow, himself a credentialed Master Modeler, has been working to establish a scholarship program for youth who are involved with serious modeling. Thus, he and his associates have established the “STEAM” scholarship program, which adds “ART” to the STEM program, making it “STEAM.” And indeed, what is model railroading, if not art, even “fine art?” (As Howard Zane would say).*”

Learn more, here: <https://newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship/>

Are you the parent or grand-parent of a kid who needs some financial help with college? Or do you know such a youngster? If that youngster is involved in model railroading or any modeling art, connect him or her with Jim's scholarship program. You may also want to contribute to the fund yourself. I did.

Visit this web page: <https://newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship>"

Thank you Scott Geare for including New Tracks in your show and also in your show's report which goes to all your vendors. We look forward to being in your future Timonium shows.

I am also pleased that the National Retail Hobby Stores Association (NRHSA) included New Tracks and our scholarship in their Monthly Magazine "Hobby Merchandiser". Having the support of this association and local hobby stores is very important in helping to get our message out to potential applicants and donors.

What The New Tracks Team can do to Help Make our 2024/2025 Scholarship a Success: Donate to Our 2024/2025 Scholarship Program

The New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship (NTMMS) grants scholarships to qualified students who will be or are pursuing a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts or Math) program at a two-year or four-year college or university or an accredited technical school.

We have set a goal to grant at least \$4,000.00 in scholarships for the 2024-2025 academic year and are soliciting donations to help reach that ambitious goal. As a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, your donation to the scholarship is tax deductible as allowed by law.

There are several ways that you can donate to the New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship:

The simplest way for individuals or organizations to donate is to use the Zeffy platform. We have chosen Zeffy as they insure that 100% of your contribution will go to the scholarship. There are no processing or administrative fees. To use the Zeffy platform, please [click here](#). If you wish to make a contribution by check, make the check payable to New Tracks Mentoring, Inc., and mail it to:

New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship:
c/o Kevin Macomber
1140 Riverview Road
Dauphin, PA 17018

Corporate Donors

There are several tiers of donations available to companies who wish to support the New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship. All companies who donate at any of these levels will be eligible to have their logo and links on the scholarship page of the New Tracks Modeling web site for that annual cycle (one year cycle after the award of the previous year scholarship).

Companies that donate \$250 in any annual scholarship cycle will be identified as Brass Donors; Silver Donors will be recognized for a \$500 contribution, Gold Donors for a \$750 contribution and Platinum Donors for a \$1,000 contribution. Donors who contribute at least \$2,000 will be listed as a specific scholarship sponsor. Please contact us at ntms@newtracksmodeling.com to arrange for your corporate donations. Donate early to maximize your exposure. Remember, your contribution will help the young modelers who are the future of our hobby.

New Tracks Mentoring, Inc. is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. A copy of the official registration and financial information

may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling toll-free 1-800-435-7352 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state.

Applications for Our 2024/2025 Scholarship Program

We will begin accepting applications for the 2024-2025 academic year on January 1, 2024. Our goal is to award at least \$4,000.00 in scholarships for 2024-2025 (number and amount will be announced January 1, 2024). We recommend that interested applicants download a copy of the application for review even if you plan to apply on-line. If you have any questions, please email us at ntms@newtracksmodeling.com

Qualified applicants MUST meet the following criteria:

- Must currently be either a current high school senior or a high school graduate living in the United States.
- Are planning to or currently attending a two-year or four-year university, college or accredited technical school in academic year 2024-25 with an intent to pursue a degree in one of the STEAM fields.
- Have a current GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Demonstrate in either a model railroading or other modeling youth activity program such as Youth in Model Railroading®, Scouts MRR program, 4H model railroading, MRR Youth clinics, active participant in building a home layout, or belong to an organized model railroad club. Participation in general modeling clubs and activities will also be considered.
- Write an essay of at least 500 words describing how their involvement in modeling and model railroading as a hobby has impacted their lives and benefited their education within one or more of the STEAM areas of academic pursuit.
- Demonstration of having designed and/or built models by submitting photos and descriptions of at least two models completed by the applicant.
- Provide two references to affirm applicant's involvement in railroad or other modeling activities. (NTMMS will be contacting any listed references, so please let them know ahead of time).

Please note: Scholarship funds will be disbursed directly to the Bursars Office of the school where the student will be attending. Any NTM staff member or relative is prohibited from applying for this scholarship.

Applications can be submitted on-line or by mail.

[Click here to download an application for review.](#)

On-Line Application will be available January 1, 2024.

Please note that you MUST have a Google Account to complete this on-line form as you will need to upload files.

If you have questions or need assistance, contact us here at: ntmms@newtracksmodeling.com

Help Notify Eligible Applicants

Bob Davidson donated three banners through his company, Exhibits And More, which will be shown at train shows and rail expos across the country.

Each banner is 3' wide and about 7' tall and has a QR code on it to link you directly to our website to get more information including the application to apply.

It's a retractable unit that is very easy to ship and set-up. So if you want one for your event, let Bob Davidson know at: bobdavidson@newtracksmodeling.com.

Look for New Tracks at any show you attend. We hope to be represented at as many shows as possible for our 2024/2025 program . If you want to take one of our banners, or help man a table, or have us be a part of your table, let Bob Davidson know at: bobdavidson@newtracksmodeling.com.

Remember, one of these years, your younger kids or grandkids may benefit from the New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship program that you helped start. I truly hope so. Thank you.

Thank you to everyone who helped us display the banners at shows around the country last year. We are currently taking reservations for our banners for our second year's (2023/2024) Scholarship Program. Let us know if you can help show a banner.

New Tracks is the only organization, we are aware of, comprised solely of volunteers from the model railroad community who have created a nonprofit company whose sole purpose is to provide scholarships throughout the United States for the benefit of young modelers who are pursuing their STEAM education after High School graduation, in a college, university or accredited technical school.

The Contributions and help by current model railroaders can help the next generation of modelers continue the traditions of our great hobby. For more information visit our website at newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship.

New Tracks Modeling News: A New Series on Our Wednesday Shows Focusing on Specific Scales: N Scale, S Scale, O Scale, O Gauge Hi-Rail, and G scale Model Railroading

I have had many discussions with modelers who say things like: "What is scale (X) all about? Does anyone really model in (X) scale? Can I build a model of ?? in (X) scale?" The scale can be G, O, O Hi-Rail, S, or N. I never get asked such questions about rides on, live steam, HO, or Z scales. I'm not sure why, but if we get questions on other scales, then we will add these scales later.

So we decided to start a monthly segment on G, O, O Hi-Rail, S, and N Scale, hosted by knowledgeable talented modelers in each scale, to try and have your questions answered and information given about what is possible and things a new modeler entering those scales might need to consider. One scale will be discussed each month, starting in our November, 2023 shows. Here are the dates and hosts for the November and December, 2023 shows. If you have specific questions you want addressed, or a specific person you would like to see on a scale segment, please contact the appropriate host.

G Scale Steve Bittinger (11/29, 12/27) Steve.Bittinger@newtracksmodeling.com

O Scale David Schultz (11/15, 12/6). David.Schultz@newtracksmodeling.com

Sponsored by O Scale Central

S Scale Timothy Huebner (11/1, 12/20) Timothy.Huebner@newtracksmodeling.com

Sponsored by NASG

N Scale Clem Harris (11/8, 12/13) Clem.Harris@newtracksmodeling.com



After these shows, we will evaluate our content based on your, the viewers, reactions and comments. So if you are interested in discussing something specific about one of these scales, please let the host know and tell him what you want to know and who you would like him to interview. It's up to you to help the host decide what these scale segments discuss and who are guests on the segments. Please subscribe to our website: newtracksmodeling.com so you don't miss any of these discussions.

You, the New Tracks Modeling's team of volunteers and donors, have helped make New Tracks Modeling Zoom shows possible – thank you. Please continue your support.

For all the financial and volunteer support New Tracks Modeling is receiving for our Wednesday and Thursday shows, it is obvious to me that “YOU”, the donors and volunteers who produce our shows, and others who do all the many jobs necessary to participate in our shows, create the website, develop our YouTube, Facebook, Zoom posts and other marketing, etc. are doing an outstanding job. I know this because of the favorable emails I get, the growth of our viewer community, and the interest shown for our programs by the wider model railroading community. Thank you all so very much.

I truly hope each of you are as proud as I am of your contributions and achievements that are creating New Tracks Modeling as the modelers and mentoring place to be for current and future model railroaders. This is what sets us apart: “Mentors Helping Modelers Build”. And the great part is we are only getting started in helping the younger modelers develop into the modelers and mentors of tomorrow. With your continued help, we have a lot more coming.

Now Please Meet a S Scale Modeler

This S scale modeler is putting on the 2024 Sn3 Symposium in Phoenix, Arizona May 2-4, 2024. I recently had him as a guest on my Wednesday evening Zoom show and was very impressed with the plans for the Symposium and his dedication to our hobby. I am profiling him in this article so all of you can meet a person who is making a significant contribution to S scale and our model railroading hobby. Please meet:



Jim Spice

I grew up, as many did in the 40-50's with an "O" gauge train set that ran around in circles.

In most cases, it was only operational at Christmas time. Such was the case with me and my family. My Dad had made a board that sat under the tree and had all these cardboard buildings with Christmas lights in them. We could not afford the expensive "Lionel" trains so I always had "Marx" brand. They ran well, and for a small kid, it was great.

Fast forward a few years and my Dad figured we should build something more "Permanent" in our basement. It was a grand affair made with three rail "O" track and chicken wire with linoleum paste for base scenery. I was in my early teens and had some part time jobs mowing lawns, etc., and finally bought my FIRST Lionel locomotive... what a thrill that was!

Then "Life Happened"... Cars, Girls, School, and Military. Sadly, the trains went away.

Now it's 1980. I'm at the hospital waiting for the birth of my youngest son and I go out to take a break (long delivery) and end up wandering to a local hobby shop. I picked up a book to have something to do while waiting entitled "Model Railroading with John Allen" by Linn Wescott. I took it back to the waiting room with me and ended up reading the whole book!

I was hooked again, and I still have that book. The talent that John had for creating realism was amazing and I thought "Wow, If I could only do that!".

I was also very curious about narrow gauge, and really loved the mountain railroad.

Through the years, I have managed to build some really fun model railroads.



I joined the NMRA in the 80's and eventually became the Division Director for the "North Shore and Western" division of the NMRA in the Chicago area (Midwest Region) and was on the Midwest Region BOD. I held that post for 11 years.

My first "Large" pike (The HO/Hon3 Denver and Cat Canyon) was built back then, and it was featured in the July 2012 issue of the *Scale Rails* magazine. I also hosted open house tours for the 75th NMRA National Convention, and hosted two nights of operating sessions with the OpSig.

I moved to Arizona in 2013 from the Chicago area, and finally started a layout in 2019.

My current Denver & Cat Canyon Western railroad is what I am working on now.

It is Sn3 and can be visited at denvercatcanyonwestern.com

I love hand laying track and building scenery.



My mentors in the hobby were (of course) My Dad, and a very good friend, Don Cook MMR.

But most of my skills have been developed by trial and error.

I do take great pride in helping others develop those same skills, and have a few fellows that come over and get some "Hands on" tutoring.

But...my favorite part of the hobby is operating. I love seeing a model railroad performing like the prototype and the camaraderie with my peers is second to none.

Also, I enjoy seeing the diverse system folks use to operate their railroads.

To sum it all up; Model Railroading is FUN!!

Thanks Jim for all your help. I wish you all the best for the 2024 Symposium. By the way, the website is: sn3symposium.com. Jim can be reached at James.Spice@newtracksmodeling.com.

Reader's Views on Creating Enthusiasm in Dioramas and Scenes

To refresh your memory, in the last issue I wrote: "Yesterday I talked to a professional modeler who makes dioramas for museums. He caused me to think about our dioramas or individual scenes, as being truly inspirational and opportunities to convey our "enthusiasm" for model railroading to viewers through our modeling. But how do we convey "enthusiasm"? To me, this will require taking our modeling to a different level. We can't just strive for good enough, or even worry if our model will get a NMRA merit award or win a contest. It seems to me showing "enthusiasm" requires more of us. Phil Edholm talks about our models displaying "emotions" to viewers. Maybe this plays a large part in what "enthusiasm" is all about.

I got a lot of great replies from readers which have helped me further clarify this issue in my mind. Read on, and again, send me your emails with your comments to jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

The first comment to really strike home for me was because I have made all the mistakes Dan talks about below in building a layout. His last comment I know is true because I have experienced the feelings about "loving" the scene I am creating. Thanks Dan for putting these modeling tips together.

Daniel Bigda

Jim, I wrote the below to help modelers with their layout or module builds. Hope this helps with your talking points from the post on-line:

Having built a few layouts... I would consider these valuable lessons.

- While measuring the room, I use masking tape where the table edges are going to be. I tape right to the floor. This way, I know how it will be and all. Once I have the table made, I pull the tape. You can also lay the track on the floor to make sure everything fits and works well... this helps with visioning the layout.
- No duck unders... having those suck. Especially for those with back, leg, hip issues. If you feel you need a duck under, then build the walkway area with a lift out bridge or something similar, because ducking under sucks!
- Reach... only make the benchwork as far as you can reach. If it's out of reach, that is where your issues will be. If you can get to the tables from both sides, then your reach to center from each side is your width.
- Height... I would have made mine chest height. It isn't, and I contemplate raising the layout every day.
- Electrical... do that before scenery, at least the bus wires – get them run under the layout.
- Height of scenery works better to the eye than depth of scenery.

- Make all benchwork modular. So if you don't like something or want a change, taking out the old and inserting a new piece is easier. Plus, you can work on the new piece while the old one is still in place and you can still run trains.
- For O-Scale, use 3/4" plywood sub road bed. For the areas where sometimes risers get a little wide, the plywood being a little thicker, won't sag (1/2" plywood will). Don't use flake board – that stuff sucks for model RR. If you get flake board and use water against it for scenery, the flake board seems to expand and never contract.
- Wide isles are a must, you can do it with the room you have. Trust me, it is worth the effort to have these. I have two spots where the isles get close, but they open right up to wide areas. I also didn't make those areas points of interest. Make your points of interest where the isles are wide so people can gather easier without hitting benchwork.
- If you're thinking of having a turn table, one where the tracks are coming out all around it, that becomes an area of interest and people gather around it. I did mine where the mainline went behind the house and people can see into the roundhouse and also get right up to the table to see the locos turn. This turntable idea came to me this past spring, and I changed the whole yard and turn table area into another part of the layout in another area of the room to accommodate this. It works out great now.
- With your yard, well, before I forget, have a staging yard. One hidden under mountains (or there of) then your yard itself won't be cramped with cars as mine was until I did this. (I am also ridding cars of later dates because my model RR is set around 1977. So this purge is setting up nicely as I now have room for the cars that fit the timeline.) Also, keep switches within easy arm length as repair is easier, etc. I did redesign the yard as stated above, and am going to again because of the railcar purge, etc. Plus, the yard is smaller and more manageable. Well, the whole layout is.

Also, keep this in mind when you design: 1) model the places as scenes you loved as a kid or adult. Don't just put track down for the sake of putting track down... you will get bored with it. I learned this on the first layout. I thought I had all the room, and when the layout was up, it sucked. So a friend came over and told me it sucked and gave me this advice... number 1) again, model scenes you love, figure out the top five scenes you love and design them into the layout, then the next five and so on. You find that the layout fills out nicely and you will want to work on it all the time. So grab the 1st thing you want to model, then the 2nd, then the 3rd, then the 4th, then the 5th, and see if you can 'fit' those into the available model RR area. If not, you might have to leave out some areas you love. Try another place you love, etc. I have also made scale "paper modules", and you can move them around on a scaled drawing you have. That way you can see if the scene fits, etc. Anyhow, designing and building is fun! Good luck! I hope these points help. ~ Dan

These next several comments I feel are getting very close to explaining what enthusiasm in our modeling means. Do you agree? Does your modeling seek to achieve these goals?

In this next comment, Alan Kleipass used the word, verisimilitude, I had to look it up. Here is the definition I found. "Verisimilitude is just how real a narrative seems, how true-to-life it is. Movies, TV shows, songs, stories, and poems with verisimilitude draw in the audience and convince us to pretend they are real." I believe Alan is correct in using this word as it does apply to our modeling.

Alan Kleipass

"Modeling enthusiasm makes me think of layouts like The Utah Belt, Franklin & South Manchester, and Yosemite Valley, as well as the amazing modeling of Bob Boudreau and his Fundy Northern. Four very different approaches to the hobby, but loaded with realism, verisimilitude, and craftsmanship.

A perfect scene need not be recognizable, but merely believably realistic.

A simple but realistic scene does more to attract new modelers than a full-scale model of, say, Grand Central Terminal in NYC, because the former is within grasp of a new modeler, while the latter is intimidating to even experienced modelers, never mind the wannabe or newbie.

If sharing our modeling enthusiasm is meant to attract new people to the hobby, and/or encourage the "toy train" hobbyists to up their game to the next level, then we need to strip the ego from our enthusiasm. The message should NOT be "look at what I built - heap accolades on me!" Instead, we should enthusiastically proclaim, "you, too, can build like this, and I'm here to help you bring your vision to life."

Art Carlton talks about our "mind's eye". I never thought about this before. Didn't know I might even have one! How about you?

Art Carlton

As someone who scratch builds and also builds museum displays, you have basically described enthusiasm in your second paragraph of this post. However, I would add this. I just hope it make sense.

An individual has two eyes, the eyes you actually see with and "your mind's eye." Your mind's eye will see things your eyeballs will not see. The mind's eye will see the smallest details that the eyeball will not see, and trick your mind that the diorama or model is real. If a viewer gets all excited (enthusiasm) about a diorama/model without knowing why, you have activated their "mind's eye", hence causing that model enthusiasm. I can personally tell you, it's a total rush when you activate an individual's "mind's eye." You will know because the viewer will say, "this looks so real" and then start describing the story the diorama is telling them. I believe it's at this point you have captured model enthusiasm.

Try building a diorama using your mind's eye. To do this you have dig down deep and study every little detail of the prototype. I mean go deep, all the way down to the dust on the surface of things. It's an experience you will never forget when you can build a model using your mind's eye. To me, it's like a bad addiction to a drug.

Next, Dave Allen talks about his 3rd eye. I guess I may need new glasses if I have one of these!

Dave Allen

I have the 3rd eye trick in the mind, it's like seeing it on a screen in your head before you lay the first piece. I often find the hardest bit is getting out into the real world.

Dave Allen followed up his comment, after I said "I don't understand".

Jim Kellow to be honest, it's just something my dad used to be able to do to. Imagineering he used to call it. I've been building dioramas now since about 2017, my dad was a keen railway modeller himself before passing in 2016. Just means when I build a kit it's already a 3D model building in my head I can work to, almost like a jigsaw picture reference. My diorama scenes are the same. I have the finished completed scene in my head.

And then, Henk Meerhof, a modeler in Denmark who is a member of the New Tracks Modeling management team, said something that stopped me in my tracks. He quoted: "René Magritte had it right: Ceci n'est pas une pipe." Read his comments to understand what he was saying. My high school Latin and college Spanish were no help here!

Henk C Meerhof

Modeling enthusiasm for me is a separate thing to model making. If the enthusiasm isn't there, you often can tell by the result being okay instead of magnificent.

But those things have no relation at all to the model being realistic or not. You can be very enthusiastic about a building in Lego bricks, still they never fool the viewer in doubting their eyes if the subject is real or a model, Legos are clearly 'the model'.

So where enters this enthusiasm? It enters if the build becomes believable. It enters when the viewer no longer sees the materials used, but is pulled into the build and experiences to 'be there' in that model, diorama or whatever you build. Realism, or quality of the build, has little to do with that. Our brains are very capable to experience human thoughts from a stick-man drawing by a toddler, yet struggle to see realism in a highly detailed model with a logical error in it.

In the end it all comes down to the experience, both for the builder while creating, and the viewer while observing the item made.

René Magritte had it right: Ceci n'est pas une pipe.

What we make is not real, it is in our imagination, but do we believe it?

Well what do you think?

There were many other comments that I should include because I found all of them interesting, but these particularly struck a nerve in me and added a new dimension to my thinking about my modeling and its impact, or lack there of, on the people seeing it.

As you know, I am convinced model railroaders produce models that are an art form and have a definite impact on viewers. If we are building something we love to build, loaded with realism, verisimilitude, and craftsmanship, and we have viewed it with our 3rd eye and mind's eye, I believe we will have created models with emotion and enthusiasm that are true pieces of art. Do you agree? Do you care? I bet you do care. Let me know either way. My email is: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

Interesting Responses to My Article and Editorial Comments in the August/September 2023 Issue of This Magazine.

I got some very insightful comments from readers about my Guest Editorial about “What Modelers Want to Build” and my article about “What Makes a Great Kit” in the last issue of this magazine. I really appreciate the feedback. I hope the ideas I write about will inspire more of you to comment. I really think these discussions are very valuable for S Scalpers to consider, reflect on, and come out of the closet and express opinions and ideas. Commenting is like learning to build a model. You’ve got to first “Get up and try”.

Here is the comment about my editorial that immediately got my attention from:

“I have written extensively on the topic of the future of the hobby. (Nicholas Kalis *Model Railroad Hobbyist* June 2016 #76 “Reversing the Decline in Participation in Model Railroading Depends on Taking Two Steps”).

I skimmed your excellent article. Just a few points to respond.

1. Military and plastic modeling is thriving, yet it has been perhaps never that anyone has seen a tank or half-track go down their street.

2. International Plastic Modelers Society (IPMS) events have attendees who shop for models and are at least often one or two generations younger than most model railroaders – including myself – I am 67 and perhaps in the younger crowd of model railroaders.

3. I have spoken about smaller layouts being the answer – younger men don’t have the room for a basement model railroad.

a. Homes have not gotten smaller in the US, they have gotten bigger, but with wives working they now demand that much of the basement be devoted to home gym, home theater, wife's hobby room, etc.

b. While homes have gotten bigger, younger men may still be living in an apartment or condo, or townhouse alone or with a small family – if the mags tell him the basement empire is the only way to go or the goal, then we turn them off.

c. Basement empires only work for men who have risen through the ranks of their profession or employment and enjoy the monster basement or a separate building.

d. I have had my ideas published in *MRH* with a very favorable response.

e. However, I once had something published advocating for smaller layouts and it brought out a bunch of very angry armchair modelers – the armchair modelers want to drool over basement empires either in published form or via magazines. They get hostile when smaller layouts are mentioned because they have no intention of ever building a model railroad – they want to see what others have built so the small layout is a threat to their enjoyment.

f. One hostile writer wrote something to the effect that “You must be one of those fellows who do not believe children should be graded in school” – apparently he felt that small layouts were a testament in his eyes to mediocrity.

Thanks for your article in the S Scale mag. ~ Nick”

I replied to Nick by email and later by phone because I wanted to find out more about him and his modeling. Also, I frankly don't understand why young modelers are building other plastic scale models but not railroad related. I don't think many, if any, model railroaders are participating in the IMPS events? Why? I don't know. Has anyone asked to participate.

I discussed with Nick about being a guest on my Weekly New Tracks Modeling Zoom show and discussing “Modeling Small Layouts”. He agreed and his first monthly show was September 6, 2023. I don't think enough attention is being devoted to discussing the creativity and challenges involved with building a small layout. For many modelers, the model railroad option is small, or no layout at all.

A video of all these segments is available on our YouTube channel, New Tracks Modeling. I hope these discussions will stimulate your thoughts about building a model railroad scene of some size. To me, small model railroads encompass dioramas, modules, T-Track, micro layouts, shelf layouts and any other size the builder considers to be his small railroad. So let's hear about your small layout. Nick's email is: Nicholas.Kalis@newtracksmodeling.com.

I also heard from modelers about my comments on “What makes a Great Kit”. These two comments really got my attention:

Thomas Detmer

“Hi Jim, I read with great interest the many comments you received about what makes a great kit. Two additional ideas come to mind that I didn't see addressed, at least to any great degree.

First, I think at least some modelers are intimidated by the whole painting part of putting together a kit. What painting should be done? At what stages? Is initial priming necessary? There is confusion over the need to prep laser kits - some instructions say it is necessary and I've heard some modelers say it isn't necessary. Also, many novices are intimidated by air brushing and the whole idea of “ruining” an expensive kit by improperly painting it. Painting is a whole subset of skills that can inhibit getting a kit built and/or built well.

Second, as I just alluded, there is a price factor entering in for some people. Many novices are intimidated by spending \$100 or \$150 or more for a nice kit and not being sure they can actually build a representative kit that they'd be proud to display on a layout. There is the concept of spending \$15 or \$25 on an inexpensive kit knowing if you mess it up you haven't lost as much. Of course, I'm not saying this price factor entered into your issue with modelers getting a "free" kit to build and then not completing it. Although, I wonder if those who are knowledgeable enough, know that they got an expensive kit and then are afraid to mess it up even if they didn't have to pay for it. I know I have this "inertia" problem where I'm afraid to start a nice kit because I'm afraid I'll mess it up. One thing that occurs to me is I might be less intimidated if I knew I could order a replacement part if I messed up a key component of the kit. If replacement parts are available more people might be willing to try a kit knowing that if they make a mistake they can get a replacement for the ruined part. In addition, I also wonder if simple kits could be made available at a reduced "starter price" for those who are not experienced so they can try making a kit without feeling they've taken out a mortgage on a kit and are afraid to mess it up. Confidence in kit building will develop and go a long way in eventually dispelling this issue for experienced modelers.

So, for what it's worth, there are a couple of additional thoughts about modeling." ~ Tom Detmer

I thanked Tom for his comments as I agree with them. I hear all the time from modelers who say they "fear to start a kit because they might mess it up", I also hear "I don't think I am a good enough modeler to show my modeling". I understand their feelings. I too have had those feelings. As the old expression goes, "I have sweated blood trying to decide if I should exhibit one of my models!". I did and it won first place.

My answer to them is part of learning to model is making mistakes and learning how to fix them. I have been building models for over 70 years and I still often, OK daily, make mistakes. But I learn something from each mistake. In fact I have learned some things more than once! You either take the risk and build the kit or opt for the other solution and not even try to build it.

What bothers me a great deal is I think most people signing up to win one of the Contest Drawing free kits in my articles know before they apply if they will build it if they win. So why do they want the free kit if they will not build it? I do not write these articles for unbuilt kit collectors! Every modeler who wins one of these kits agrees to provide photos and comments about the kit that I can share with you in a future article. But from many winners, I get nothing. So I guess they did not build the kit. It's either in the closet or sold on eBay I guess.

I have talked to a lot of kit manufacturers for my articles and Zoom shows, and every one of them is willing to offer help and advice to a modeler building their kits. Many gladly supply replacement parts if asked. But to get help, the modeler having a problem must ask.

Frankly, the lack of asking for help, is why I write these articles about mentors. I am trying to introduce talented modelers who can help other modelers gain modeling skills and develop their confidence in being able to successfully build kits, or even scratchbuild whatever they see that they want to model. But I also recognize asking for help is very hard for some people. That is why, when I introduce talented modelers, I also give a way to easily contact them. But as the old saying goes "You can bring a horse (person) to water, but you can't make them drink". But I am trying even if I fail.

This is my only other solution for fear of building.

Tom, I really do appreciate your comments and thanks again for your comments. I have had past Zoom shows about painting models and want to have more as I recognize the issues you raise.

Tom then sent me a follow up email that convinced me he is trying to learn modeling skills, but feels he needs more help. He wrote:

“Hi Jim, Thanks for the response. I should clarify that I have built a couple of kits, with more coming in the near future. I think they’ve turned out pretty well although I haven’t been too venturous about kit bashing so far. I figure at this point I’m gaining basic experience that I need and I’ll spread my wings a bit in the near future.

My comments were based on feelings I’ve had in the past and/or what I’ve heard others express. So, I personally agree with you that you have to get past the “I’m afraid I’ll mess it up” stage and just get into “doing it”. I just know it’s harder for some folks to get to that point. I also agree that if you accept a free kit, you really should try to build it. It’s too bad that some folks have taken the kit and not made it or even responded to your inquiries. It’s actually kind of rude to have done that, although I don’t mean to judge other people too harshly.

I moved a year and a half ago and have now built my new layout, although there is landscaping and scenery work to continue to do. I’m now hoping to spend some time working on some kits I have to gain some more experience with modeling. My biggest uncertainties at this point arise with painting, which is a reason why it came up in my comments to you. I’ve painted what I’ve done so far and the pieces have turned out fine, but I still am not confident about my abilities to produce nice work.

Anyway, keep encouraging people and I may try tuning in to New Tracks to learn from some experts. I’m in the Richmond, VA area, and I gather there is an active group of modelers in Hampton Roads so I’m going to watch what happens there as they develop their museum.” ~ Tom Detmer

Tom, I want you to know there is a NMRA Division in the Richmond area with a lot of really great modelers. I used to live in Williamsburg, VA and am a Life member of both the NMRA and the MER Region which includes both Richmond and Tidewater. Look both Divisions up on the NMRA.org website.

I hope Tom’s learning experiences and willingness to “try” building something he is not sure he can do will help other modelers gain the courage to “try”, as I know that is the key to successful modeling.

Now, here’s more about Tom and his S Scale Journey. You may find you are on the same New Tracks Modeling trip he discusses. I hope so.

I am an S gauge model railroader with my origins in American Flyer trains. My first model train was an AF 501T set that I received in 1953 at Christmas. During the 1950’s, I had a basic train layout and at that time I did not get involved with the modeling aspects of the hobby.

As a young and middle-aged adult, I was occupied with my family, education, career, and other hobbies and ignored my childhood trains which had been set aside and stored for me. In the early 1990’s, my parents gave me my childhood trains. A good friend who is a train buff got me interested in buying one of the newer Lionel AF passenger train sets to augment my basic Flyer freight train. That did it – my interest in model trains was re-kindled. Because I had the space in the basement of our house to build a layout, I proceeded to build one. The temporary tracks I had set up on the carpeted floor of the family room seemed “inconvenient” at best.

Over the next several years, my friend and I traveled to train shows and I started buying Flyer pieces I couldn’t have acquired as a child. So, during the next 30 years, my railroad empire expanded with a large fleet of locomotives, freight cars and passenger cars, and a large operating layout in my Wisconsin basement (approximately 45’x16’ in its final iteration).

I also came to realize that a model train layout is always a work in process – it seems like it is never truly finished. Still, my trains had plenty of room to run and there were operating accessories and buildings placed on the layout.

Having started with Flyer, I also had acquired Plasticville buildings early on to use on the layout as I viewed it as a “toy train layout” more than anything else. My scenery and landscaping were primitive and “toy-like”, and I never developed the skill or knowledge about how to proceed further in working on them. The finishing



work I needed to accomplish on the layout seemed to be in limbo and other projects always seemed to take priority.

Nevertheless, there was plenty of “train work” getting done – I acquired, restored, and built from junk box parts many old AF locomotives, all of which increased my basic knowledge about how these older trains worked.

I also built a custom Bucky Train (Bucky Badger being the UW mascot) and restored four old AF locomotives using my own road name – the Prairie Star Lines and my own paint scheme. Between doing this repair and restoration work, building the custom trains, and building old Pacific Rail Shops S gauge car kits, I learned a lot of basics about how model trains work and a bit about customizing them. My custom pieces, along with many of my old AF locomotives, were restored with can motors, LED lights, and electronic reverse units (I also rebuilt the famed Flyer smoke units as I love the old Flyer smoking steam locomotives).

My custom engine restoration efforts were not prototypical, and they were not intended to be. I simply wanted to make some nice running pieces that looked nice and were fun to run at train shows with our club.

I was fortunate during this time to have a couple of AF friends from our local train group who were knowledgeable about

the mechanics of AF engines. I learned a lot from working with these friends – we learned a lot by “doing things together” and by the more mechanically inclined member of the group showing us how to use certain basic shop tools, like a drill press to make things when needed and for other maintenance tasks. So, while I have had no formal training on any of the skills needed to work on my trains, I have had mentors to teach me some necessary skills.

Two of my friends and I have met regularly to work on train projects together. At one point, we were inspired to scratch-build some Mini Craft buildings for our layouts just to see if we could do it. This introduced me to the world of building model buildings, albeit basic ones. It had the advantage of both teaching us how to

build some of these structures and eliminating the pressure of trying to produce structures like the high-quality scale scale models some scale modelers build. That may seem like a small thing, but it is nice to have “no pressure”. This is supposed to be fun after all. The Lulu Lake Ice House is an example of a piece I needed for my layout even though it’s only a basic structure similar to the Mini Craft style pieces.



My interest in trains has evolved, and while I enjoy the toy train operation of my old American Flyer trains, I wanted to make my layout look more realistic, although I knew I would never be a true “scale modeler”. I decided to add more realistic buildings to the layout. During the past ten years I have acquired some building kits when I found



some reasonably priced ones. I've now built three of these kits.

Two years ago, my wife and I decided to move to Virginia to be closer to family. So, a fateful decision had to be made and I had to significantly pare down my train collection and disassemble my large layout. I took this an opportunity to think about what I really want to accomplish with my trains in the next few years. I no longer felt the need for a large layout, but I did want a decent looking layout in our new home to have trains run on a moderate sized mainline. I wanted to build the basic operating layout quickly to get trains up and running.

Design and construction of a new layout occurred in the first six months after we moved and my new layout is operational and looks decent, even with the much-dreaded landscaping to finish. It is a more realistic looking layout, and I am satisfied with the appearance even though it is not a true scale layout.

As an occasional diversion during this layout construction period, I refinished a couple of old AF reefers as custom reefers with the goal of working on my painting and decaling skills. I also built a simple utility structure for the new layout and added a welding shop I built prior to moving and a paddle shop I completed after moving. The completion of these projects and the basic layout has inspired me to work on those long ago acquired kits that are sitting in storage. There are a couple of basic structures to make (a church and a wayside station) and a couple of more complex kits. These latter kits include a somewhat complex wooden car kit (a vinegar car) and a more complex structure kit (the Miracle Chair Company kit sold by Scenery Unlimited), so





I'm hoping these kits will teach me more about building complex kits.

That brings you up to date. As you've learned, my modeling interests are eclectic and have not been based on making things prototypically or true to scale. However, as I work on some of the new kits I have I imagine the results will be realistic and true to S scale. I suppose I've evolved into a modeler with an interest in making models that are nice looking scale pieces even if I'm not a traditional rivet counter or prototyp modeler.

Thanks Tom for sharing your model railroading journey with us. You can reach Tom at thomas.detmer@newtracksmodeling.com.



Frankly, I believe there are many more modelers who have taken the same journey and are now true S Scale modelers. I would love to hear their stories. My email is: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com

Next, I want you to hear from another reader who responded to my article. He is also a model railroad manufacturer.

Jim King

As a manufacturer, I have a different perspective on the model railroad industry than a “typical” modeler. I’ve seen a steady decline in kit sales in S and O over the past 8-10 years. Understandable, given that attrition is a major factor in any hobby, especially in more “established” scales. Downsizing to retirement centers or smaller houses, sometimes with no extra room for even a small layout, is increasingly common. Physical limitations, including poor eyesight, also contribute to this. And there’s always the “I’ll get around to it someday” saying when buying this or that “gotta have” item. In my experience, regardless of scale, kits generally end up in a dark box in the closet and “someday” never arrives for various reasons. Some may have multiple owners before actually being built or, sadly, ending up in a dumpster when the family doesn’t know how to dispose of Dad’s collection.

My biggest frustration lies with comments such as “that’s too hard for me to build” or “I can’t do that”. These people have quit before they start. My reply is that none of us was born knowing how to build anything. Start small, like with an old plastic (Flyer or Tyco) car from the ‘50s or ‘60s you buy at a train show for \$5 and learn how to paint with an inexpensive airbrush and acrylic paint. Once you gain some confidence, move up to buying basic tools (MicroMark is a great source) and watch YouTube how-to videos if you don’t have a mentor. Staring at a kit’s contents and wishing you could build it does nothing but further the “I can’t do it” attitude. To me, there’s nothing worse in life than to give up before you start! Too many people are afraid of messing up. There’s no telling how many engine and loco shells I’ve thrown in the trash after “messing up”... that’s how we learn.

Many of my HO resin kit customers say they will buy my products if they are “modern era” and of a prototype that won’t be offered as RTR, which is getting harder to choose when one considers the vast number of VERY unique, road-specific cars and engines offered by companies over the past 20 years (at least). Defining “modern” is difficult. Some say post-2000 is a good cutoff date, others say post-1970 is OK. For the next few years, until I retire at 70 (I’m 64 now), my product line will reflect these requests when possible, but there are a few pre-1970 subjects that lasted well into the ‘80s. There’s no point in spending many hours of research and design just to produce a kit that won’t sell.

A few of my contacts have stated that their customer base indicates a growing interest in 3-rail O scale largely from former HO modelers. The two main players in O are Atlas and Lionel. The former offers a growing product line that attracts “modern” modelers. Converting wheelsets and couplers to 2-rail operation is fairly simple. Everything else above the trucks remains largely the same and provides a good basis for additional details, painting, weathering, and so on. If space and finances are limited, it only takes a few cars and an engine to create a switching shelf layout. Same for S scale, but the “modern” offerings are much more limited.

My impression of the overall hobby is that it’s not declining but there are certainly scales that seem to be shrinking, especially ones that “traditionally” require more hands-on, like O and S and the narrow gauges of both scales. It’s hard to measure accurately. I have no doubt that building models, as you’ve stated, is becoming an increasing part of our history. This reflects the younger population’s time constraints, not wanting to learn the craft, and preferring RTR over kits. 3D printing using inexpensive, easy-to-learn, CAD software has revolutionized our hobby, regardless of scale. This requires a different set of skills that may be more “accepted” by the younger crowd simply because it’s another variation of the digital world. Mentoring from knowledgeable hobby shop employees, attending clubs, and having a parent involved with the hobby were the driving forces behind my exposure to HO. Most, sometimes all, of these resources have drastically shrunk or been eliminated in many parts of the country.

The flurry of HO products, some with big price tags, emanating from China indicates there's a significant demand for top-quality products. We live in a fast-paced world; even retirees can be caught up in a faster pace than they may wish, but that's just how it is. Pick what YOU want to do, enjoy it, share results, and move on. The diversity of the hobby is what makes it appealing to many, including electronics and operations. ~ Jim King (828) 777-5619 jimking3@charter.net

Jim, thanks so much for your comments. I really appreciate your thoughts. I called Jim and our discussion produced the following challenge for the readers of this magazine who build S scale models.

1. We agreed that many S scale modelers seem to not want to participate in S scale discussions. Not all S scalers feel that way, but in our opinion way too many do. Why? No idea! Jim gave me a typical example. Jim said he has posted requests for information and guidance about kits he might offer for sale in order to get an idea if the S scale market was interested in them. He said he may hear from a few modelers, but for the most part the S scale community is quiet. I told him I have heard that same problem from other people. I have the same problem getting comments to my articles. I told him maybe the S scale modeler just does not care about either my articles or if he brings new S scale products to market. Jim's reply was then he has an easy decision, not to make a S scale product. Yep, I have heard this sentiment from other manufacturers in S scale. In effect, if the S scale modeler wants new products, then they need to tell the manufacturers, who for the most part are Mom and Pop operations and not large well funded corporations. These manufacturers are willing to provide us products, but only if we will talk to them and buy the new product. My decision? Believe it or not, my articles are meant to help you become a better modeler. If you don't care or feel my articles are not worth your time to comment on, then why should I continue to write them? Beats me. A lot of my friends believe I am just wasting my time.

2. Jim and I also talked about trust between S scale manufacturers and S scale modelers. In the past, manufacturers have been asked to provide products by modelers, but when the product becomes available sales do not occur, even in some cases by the modelers who encouraged the manufacturer to offer the product. So now manufacturers require up front payment for new products prior to making them available. In effect, new product development starts with the buyer being willing to pay before the manufacturer produces the item.

I completely understand the manufacturer's viewpoint. I have not heard from one contest winner since I wrote my last article in this magazine. Many won a free kit and then did not build it as far as I know. If you want me to continue asking S scale manufacturers to offer contest drawings in my articles, I need to hear from you that you built the kit and photos of how it looks. If readers want contest drawings to continue, then let me know. If I don't hear from you, I won't bother to ask manufacturers to provide them. But if you do win one of the contests and don't fulfill your obligation to build it and provide photos and your comments about building the kit so all of the readers of this magazine can benefit from your experience, then you will be asked to pay the manufacturer for the kit cost including shipping. My email is jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com

I look forward to hearing from you. It is time for more members of the S scale community to please speak up.

When I asked Chat GPT AI why S scale modelers are not replying to my articles, the answer was things I am already trying to do over the past almost 6 years? I guess I am failing!

This message has been generated by Nova - download it for free:

<https://novaappai.page.link/4oGKadBum7dWNwdP8>

“There could be several reasons why S scale modelers may not be giving you feedback on your articles. Here are a few possibilities:

1. **Lack of Visibility:** It's possible that your articles are not reaching the right audience or are not being promoted effectively. Consider sharing your articles on platforms or forums specifically dedicated to S scale modeling to increase visibility among enthusiasts.

2. **Timing and Relevance:** Make sure that your articles are timely and address topics of interest to S scale modelers. If the content is not relevant or doesn't align with their current needs or trends, it may not generate much feedback.

3. **Quality and Engagement:** Take a critical look at the quality of your articles. Are they well-written, informative, and engaging? If the content doesn't catch the attention of readers or fails to provide value, they may not feel compelled to provide feedback.

4. **Lack of Incentives:** Sometimes, people need incentives to provide feedback, such as contests, rewards, or the opportunity to be featured on your platform. Consider offering some form of incentive to encourage S scale modelers to engage with your articles.

5. **Limited Reach:** It's possible that your articles are simply not reaching enough S scale modelers. Consider expanding your network by connecting with more enthusiasts, joining relevant online communities, attending model railroading conventions, or collaborating with established S Scale modelers.

Remember, building a community and fostering engagement takes time and consistent effort. Keep improving the quality of your content, actively engage with the S scale modeler community, and be patient as you build your readership.”

Bing AI said: “I’m sorry to hear that you are not getting the feedback you want from your articles. Writing articles is a great way to share your knowledge and passion for S scale model trains with other enthusiasts. However, getting feedback can be challenging, especially if your audience is not very active or engaged.

There are some possible reasons why S scale modelers are not replying to your articles. Maybe they are not aware of your articles, or they don’t have the time or interest to read them. Maybe they don’t feel comfortable giving feedback, or they don’t know how to give constructive criticism. Maybe they are satisfied with your articles and don’t have anything to add.

Whatever the reason, there are some steps you can take to increase the chances of getting feedback on your articles. Here are some suggestions:

- Make sure your articles are easy to find and access. You can use social media platforms, online forums, newsletters, or blogs to promote your articles and reach a wider audience. For example, you can post a link to your article on the S scale SIG website, which is a popular resource for S scale modelers.

- Make sure your articles are easy to read and understand. You can use clear and concise language, proper grammar and spelling, headings and subheadings, bullet points and lists, images and diagrams, and other formatting tools to make your articles more attractive and organized. You can also use tools like [Grammarly] or [Hemingway] to check and improve your writing.

- Make sure your articles are relevant and interesting. You can choose topics that are current, trending, or controversial in the S scale community, or topics that address common problems or questions that modelers have. You can also use data, facts, examples, stories, opinions, or humor to make your articles more engaging and informative.

- Make sure your articles invite feedback. You can end your articles with a question, a challenge, a poll, a survey, or a call to action that encourages readers to share their thoughts, opinions, experiences, or suggestions. You can also ask for specific feedback on certain aspects of your article, such as the content, the style, the structure, or the tone.

- Make sure you respond to feedback. When you receive feedback on your articles, whether positive or negative, you should always thank the person who gave it and acknowledge their contribution. You should also show that you are open to feedback and willing to learn from it. You can ask for clarification, explanation, or examples if you don't understand the feedback. You can also agree or disagree with the feedback respectfully and explain why. You can also show how you have implemented or plan to implement the feedback in your future articles.

I hope these tips will help you get more feedback on your articles and improve your writing skills. I think you have a lot of potential as an S scale modeler and writer. Keep up the good work!”

Well readers, you tell me which of these suggestions am I not doing? Please help me understand what I can do to get your involvement in my articles. I look forward to hearing from you.

New Tracks Modeling Build Alongs

Our Build Along Modeling experiences provide you a Personal Mentor and great discounted prices on the models to be built. Join us on our weekly Zoom shows for a great learning experience that will help you improve your modeling.



Dylan Lambert Locomotive Works

Starting December 6, 2023 Earl Hackett will build Lambert Locomotive Works new Commuter Coach in HO scale as a Build Along on our Zoom shows December 6, 13, 20, and 27, 2023. A 20% discount on the model will be available to New Tracks Modeling viewers between November 10, and December 27, 2023. To get the discount

please use the code **NTRACK** when ordering. [More information about the Lambert Locomotive products is available on their website.](#)

2024 Build Alongs

Frenchman River Model Works



Starting January 10, 2024 Frenchman River Model Works Build Along with Tom Farrell building two kits. A Lobster Boat and the Lobster Shack. There is a 20% discount on the HO and O Scale Lobster Boat and Lobster Shack kits, starting September 1, 2023 and ending February 15, 2024. To get the discount use the code: **NEWTRX**. [For more information about these and other products please visit their website.](#)

More Build Alongs to come

I hope you want to participate in all the "Build Alongs". The modelers and manufacturers who are making these events possible, are doing them to try to help you improve your skills and have more enjoyment and confidence in your modeling. They are a true learning experience that have helped many modelers. So if you have been sitting on the sidelines for awhile give model building a try with the help of a mentor.

I am looking for more modelers and manufacturers to be involved in future "Build Alongs" in 2024. Contact me if you are interested at: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

New Tracks Modeling Watch Me Build

These segments provide modelers the opportunity to build a model to demonstrate their modeling skills and techniques. Viewers can ask questions and learn from experienced modelers various facets of our hobby.

Upcoming 2023 Show Segments:

October 4, 2023: Jeff Jordan builds a structure in Styrene.

October 11, 2023: Myles Marcovitch scratching Victorian era structure using 3D printing , laser cutting technology and old school methods.

December 6, 2023: Jeff Jordan will kit-bash a craftsman kit to represent a local Prototype structure.

2024 Show Segments

January 11, 2024: Keith Sampler will demonstrate how to use vacuum forming in model railroading. I have never tried this, have you?

These segments present modelers who want to share their modeling efforts, and skills. They discuss their modeling techniques so others can benefit. These segments can be for one or more shows depending on the details included for the model building presentation.

What is a Modeling Lifestyle: A different type of New Tracks Modeling Show produced on Thursday evenings at 7pm EDT only on our YouTube channel New Tracks Modeling.

New Tracks Modeling has a different type of live show called: Modeling Lifestyles. The shows are only available live on our YouTube Channel, New Tracks Modeling.

This is your opportunity to meet and chat with some of today's modelers who are making significant contributions to our hobby. You can see videos of all the interviews we have conducted so far on our [YouTube channel, New Tracks Modeling](#).

For a list of the modelers who will be interviewed on our future shows please visit and subscribe to our website newtracksmodeling.com. Please also subscribe to our YouTube channel: New Tracks Modeling, and Ring the bell to get prior notification of the shows.

Weekly Wednesday Show Segments

Find your Mentor at Local CLUBS and NMRA DIVISIONS: A Bi-Weekly Segment about Local Organizations

Supported by the NMRA

This Bi-weekly Segment introduces local model railroading organizations where many of us have found mentors, modeling help, and met some really outstanding modelers. I credit these local organizations with providing much of my modeling education and believe such organizations can also help you.

Phil Edholm, a NMRA Division Superintendent of the NMRA PCR/Coast Division, which includes the San Francisco Bay Area down to Monterey in California, hosts this segment.

Every other week, these segments feature an NMRA Division or Local Club leader to discuss what activities they do, how they engage with members, how they recruit new members, and other topics. The focus is a discussion around what they have done that is successful and unique. The goal is to have actionable ideas come out to be used by other organization in their local activities.

Each time we try and identify a few key nuggets that all of us in model railroading leadership positions can use. Each segment is live streamed to our YouTube channel New Tracks Modeling. You can see all of the previous interviews on there.

If you ,or someone you know, is actively involved in an NMRA Division or a Local Club and you would like to discuss how your organization is thriving (or surviving) in the new world, please contact Phil Edholm at coastsup23@gmail.com or call 408-832-5618.



Let's Go To Our Local Modeling Hobby Store

A monthly segment with hobby store owners supported by the National Retail Hobby Stores Association (NRHSA).

“Local hobby shops need modelers and modelers need local hobby shops”. This segment shows just how true this statement is.

Mark Poggendorf, a NMRA member working on his MMR, a hobby manufacturer, and owner of Poggies Trains Hobby Shop, and a member of the National Retail Hobby Stores Association (NRHSA), started a monthly show segment concerning common issues facing hobby shops and modelers. The focus of these segments is on how both groups can work together for their mutual benefit and hopefully introduce the value of your local hobby store to help you become a more knowledgeable and more skilled model builder.

Mark’s involvement in our hobby as a modeler, manufacturer and, hobby shop owner, who not only has a brick and mortar store in California but also attends, as a vendor, many of the train shows throughout the Country, makes him well suited to lead these discussions and provide insights into the problems and issues facing both the hobby shop industry and modelers. Who knows, you also may find a new source for your modeling products from this series.

If viewers have a hobby shop to recommend be on our show, or you are a hobby shop owner who is interested in being on our show, please let Mark know at Mark.Poggendorf@newtracksmodeling.com.

It’s that time again for me to return to my workbench and start working on something that I fell in love with and just have to model. Happens all the time. My current project is a 1938 Buick “Y” model in brass.

While I am modeling, you can help New Tracks Modeling by:

1. Volunteering to help us produce and develop our New Tracks Modeling shows.
2. Making a contribution to our Patreon account, New Tracks Modeling, to help pay for our out of pocket cost to run our shows. Click here to [donate](#).
3. Subscribing for free to our YouTube Channel, New Tracks Modeling, and ringing the bell to get advance notices of our YouTube shows including our Modeling Lifestyle series. If the advertisements on our YouTube videos are of interest, please watch them so we can gain a little revenue to produce our shows.
4. Subscribing for free to our website: NewTracksModeling.com which provides login links to our Wednesday Zoom events and also provides information about what New Tracks you can travel with us.



5. Spreading the word about our New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship program to every young Model Railroaders you know or you meet. Get the word out. Details at our website: newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship

6. Subscribe for free to *The O Scale Resource* and *The S Scale Resource* online magazines so you don't miss any of my articles and also see some great modeling by various modelers who may become one of your mentors.

7. Writing me! I love getting your comments, suggestions, and modeling ideas. I so enjoy hearing from you and having a conversation. My email is: jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com

Thank you again for reading this far. Till next time with more New Tracks Modeling, Happy Modeling!

HOW TO CONTACT US...

THE O RESOURCE
NEWS, REVIEWS, INFORMATION TO USE
SCALE

THE S RESOURCE
NEWS, REVIEWS, INFORMATION TO USE
SCALE

The Model Railroad Resource LLC
407 East Chippewa St., Dwight, IL 60420
www.oscaleresource.com / www.sscaleresource.com

Phone: 815.584.1577

amy@oscaleresource.com / daniel@oscaleresource.com

Advertising inquiries: Jeb.Kriigel@modelrailroadresource.com

S SCALE SHOWS & MEETS

S-scale Zoom Meeting

Every Tuesday at 8pm Eastern Standard US time.
hosted by Ken Zieska or Bill Lane

[Zoom Link](#)



Railroad Prototype Modelers Conference – RPM Chicagoland 2023

October 27-28, 2023, Naperville, IL

Northern Illinois University Conference Center on the NIU campus in suburban Naperville, Illinois. The center is booked and the event is on! The NIU center will open at 8:00 on both days. Events run from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Friday and 9:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday.

Fall S-Fest 2023

November 2-5, 2023

Georgios Banquets Quality Inn & Suites Conference Center

8800 W. 159th St., Orland Park, IL

110 tables of Flyer and S scale. Two S-Fest 2023

Commemorative Cars by American Models

Home layout tours.

Call Joel Lebovitz at: 847-212-3541

2023 Danville Indiana Train Show O/S

November 18, 2023

This will be the 16th year that volunteers from the CID have put on this outstanding multi-scalegauge Train Show. The 2023 Show will highlight O-S Scalers in an exclusive 2,000 square foot room for vendors, layouts, and socializing. Last year we had 14 vendors with 32 sales tables dedicated to O-S Scale Trains. Make your plans early to attend. We expect to sell out the O-S Room. [Please download the O & S Vendor Invitation here](#) to secure your sales table. NOTE: Please register and make payments to the CID contacts on the Vendor Flyer. S Scale Contact: Charles Malinowski, bmry1905@gmail.com, 317-730-3187 O Scale Contact: Eric Peterson, ericgpet@gmail.com, 904-607-7035

2024 Sn3 Symposium

May 2 to May 4, 2024

860 N Riverview, Mesa, AZ 85201

Chairman Jim Spice and all of us on the organizing committee invite you to join us in Mesa, Arizona, May 2nd to 4th, 2024. We're hard at work preparing a full range of clinics, contests, layout tours, a swap meet and other activities to make this a highly entertaining and interesting meet.

Website: <https://sn3symposium.com/>

2024 NASG Convention

The Susquehannock II Convention

The Lehigh Valley S Gaugers are excited to bring to you the "S" event of the year. For the first time in the NASG's history, we will have the Convention in the same location as the 2023 one, but don't expect this to be just a "repeat" event. Stay tuned for what we have planned. The 2024 NASG Convention is slated to be held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Wednesday 17th of July, 2024 through Saturday 20th of July, 2024 at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel, 4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111. It is hosted by the Lehigh Valley S Gaugers club.



The S Scale Resource Magazine will be providing a free listing of upcoming events. This small, text only listing will include the Event, Date, Location, Type of Event, and Contact Information. [Click here](#) to email us with your information. Please remember we are a scale magazine and may not publish all events.

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To advertise in The S Scale Resource classified listings [contact us for our rates](#). Your classified ad will appear in the section you want for 6 issues. If you do not see a section that you think would fit your products or services, let us know. We can add a category that better suits you. Your ad is hot linked to your website which puts your customers one click away from you.



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Yes, we now have a Facebook page to help keep you up to date on new products and ideas. And, even in an on-line magazine, we sometimes have more pictures than we can use, so we'll post them on Facebook.