

NER COUPLER

NMRA NORTHEASTERN REGION

No. 279

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2020



N Scale 3D Printed
Shopping Center

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Video Camera
for a G Scale Cab
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Showing off a Premier Train
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The Capitol Limited Tours the HD&O

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COVER PHOTO

Passing Cliff Tower in Pittsburgh, the Capitol Limited heads toward its home rails after touring the Hudson, Delaware and Ohio on The Model Railroad Club layout in Union, NJ. Its 1957 and the B&O was just 10 months away from ending passenger service north of Baltimore, making this vital connection with the HD&O even more important for both roads. Our story starts on page 8.

Photo: Scott Dunlap.

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FROM THE EDITOR . . . By JEFF PASTON

The train has pulled into the station as I complete my last run as your "conductor." It has been an enjoyable 10 years – five of which as editor. But, it is time to move on and let someone else take over.

Starting with our next issue (#280), Chris Carfaro becomes that "someone else" and I certainly wish him well. Chris says he is committed to continuing the improvements made to the NER Coupler over the past few years. I have full confidence that the publication is in good hands.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank all of the people who have made the NER Coupler the outstanding publication it has become. I certainly don't want to leave anyone out, but you can easily see who they are by checking the bylines and masthead of this and past issues. And thanks also go to our NER leadership, and NER and NMRA members who have supported us along the way. Thank you!



While I may not have to face the deadlines of putting out a magazine, I am not totally stepping away from serving you in the Northeastern Region.

In a moment of weakness, I volunteered to become the Region secretary, replacing the late Chip Faulter. Chip was much appreciated and did a stellar job, so I know the bar is set high.

One thing that you hear consistently in discussions about taking on duties within the NMRA is about all of the people you meet with similar interests and friendships you make. That is indeed true! And, I look forward to seeing everyone again once we can meet in person at our next event and convention.

The NER celebrates its diamond anniversary next year. (Thanks go to Chuck Diljak for designing this special logo for the 75th.) I'm looking forward to celebrating the occasion with all of our NER friends.

See you soon! 



OPEN DOEHR By JOHN DOEHRING NER President

Of Leaders and Making a Difference

I'm thinking about the juxtaposition of starts and stops, beginning and endings, and new beginnings again. My focus is on trains and model railroading, though I'm cognizant of course that there are many more important, pressing, and even life-changing issues in front of us today.

Region convention planning has this year been a wobbly affair of starts and stops itself, in this 'on or off' pandemic moment. We've now chosen the best solution we can, and a team is busy working to bring to you a 2020 NERx virtual convention this fall – one I believe will be different, distinctive, valuable – and fun. Beyond that, we're shifting each of the next several events one year out: Mill City (Lowell) in 2021, Connecticut 2022, Long Island 2023. Just a postponement, nothing cancelled or lost for good.

I've had this fact filed away now for several years, but next year will also be the 75th anniversary of the Northeastern Region – so a little extra celebration for the now Mill City 2021 convention.

I am so very grateful to those early model railroaders who first envisioned, and then took action, to bring the Northeastern Region to life. According to long time NER historian Joe Lecaroz, the Region was formed through the independent initiative in the spring of 1946 of two individuals – Allen Hazen and Henry Eighmey. On April 27-28, 1946, at the Model Railroad Club of Kingston, NY, the NER was formally organized with Hazen and Eighmey serving as co-chairmen of the effort. Seventy two new members were present there, and annual dues were set at \$1. The NER published its first newsletter that same summer (a year later it would formally become *The Coupler*). For much of its history since, the NER held a convention twice each year. [Today's once per year, but longer event format, was adopted about 15 years ago].

Over the years, and by rough count, the NER has hosted more than 130 region conventions with a couple of hundred happy modelers on average at each. That's 26,000 customers served – most of whom I'd guess had the time of their life. Not quite McDonald's, but still a lot of happy railroaders. Likewise, the NER team has published 279 issues of *The Coupler* along the way...




with many more – I'm sure – happy clients.

Looking back, the power of the decisions and actions of these early pioneers, these fearless leaders – dreamers and doers – has been profound. Sure, it's not the most important stuff in our world and lives, but it has certainly been important for our hobby. Beginnings matter.

This month, I've also paused (at times emotionally) over the loss of a friend – John Lutz, a long-time member of the HUB Division – who passed away in July. John was a quiet and unassuming fellow, but a strong leader just the same. It was John (at the time the HUB's membership chair) who introduced himself and invited me to help him work a local train show – my very first stint in volunteering in the Association. Not long after, he struck yet again, leading an initiative he called OpSfB (Op Sessions for Beginners) that introduced me to the world of playing with trains for real – today a central focus of my railroad modeling. John was a civil engineer, Cornell Naval ROTC scholar, Navy Seabee, Rutgers MBA graduate, and Eagle Scout. John wore none of these accomplishments on his sleeve. You had to get to know him to learn of his long and impressive story. Mostly, I knew John as a guy with whom to avoid eye contact. He was always looking for volunteers for something!

The power of this one man, a quiet leader, taking action to invite, help, and challenge others to grow and do more was (at least for me) profound. Friendships matter. Beginnings matter.

John Lutz was 79. He grew up in New Jersey, and though I'm not sure where, it couldn't have been far from Kingston, NY. John was four years old in 1946, and might have himself played with a Lionel set that spring while the NER was formed nearby by other strong leaders. And at this very moment, there is – I'm sure – someone doing something special, profound – a new idea, initiative, action – that will make a difference for at least some of us in the world of model railroading. I hope so.

I'm thankful today for those who came before, and lead us, and touched our lives – Allen, and Henry, and John Lutz. Now it's our turn. Beginnings matter. You and I – let's start something. 



NER Grows Again

When the Lakeshores Division moved from the Niagara Frontier Region to the Northeastern Region in 2017, the NFR's Southern Tier Division was "orphaned," surrounded by NER and Mid-Eastern Region (MER) divisions.

Members of the Southern Tier Division recently asked to be moved to the NER, which made sense since a few of them have participated in activities with the adjacent Central New York Division. The NMRA Board gave its blessing in July following approval of NFR and NER boards.

The STD members will have important decisions to make regarding its future. Since they have been largely inactive, the question remains whether they want to revive the division and stand alone, or be absorbed into an existing division or two?

The Southern Tier Division encompasses the New York State counties of

Broome, Chemung, Cortland, Schuyler, Tioga and Tompkins, and the Pennsylvania counties of Bradford and Tioga.

This makes the third time in recent years for NER expansion. Most recently, the Eastern Canada Division was created in 2018 from the the inactive Maritime Division.

There's an interesting side note to these changes. In researching the addition of the Southern Tier Division, we discovered that *no* region or division claims *portions* of two New York counties: Chenango and Delaware.

The NER and its Central New York Division are assigned just the northern half of Chenango and an undefined eastern part of Delaware County. In reality, however, it really only matters for delineating physical boundaries since there is only one NMRA member in those counties.



Seacoast Div. Leader Wins NMRA President's Award

Rich Breton of the Seacoast Division has been selected as the 2020 winner of the NMRA President's Award from the Northeastern Region. Rich has spent more than 36 years in the NMRA.

Rich faithfully provides the Seacoast Division with outstanding and helpful clinics.



He generously offers intelligent modeling advice, and willingly shares his modeling knowledge. He can be counted upon to come through with an outstanding effort, regardless of what is asked of him. In many ways, he represents exactly what

being an NMRA member is all about.

From 2001 to 2007, Rich was Seacoast Division president, as well as representing the Division at most train shows in Maine and New Hampshire. He organized all four Division Quarterly Events for each year of his term of office.

During the three NER conventions hosted by the Seacoast Division, Rich coordinated the layout tours and operating sessions. He

was chair of the Nashua NER convention. He has been a contest judge for many NER conventions, and also helped his Division with AP Merit Certificate evaluations. Rich also served on the NER Board.

Most recently, Rich has given great attention to the Heritage Park Railway Museum in Union, NH, where he is a leader among modelers creating the Museum's highly accurate HO layout. Rich built several of the structures, worked on scenery, track laying, and the operating system on the layout replicating the Union, area in 1909. – *Tage Erickson, Seacoast Division President*



Rich Breton shares the history of Union, NH, and its recreation on the Heritage Park Railway Museum model railroad with visitors.

NER COUPLER Deadlines

November 20 –	Jan-March issue
February 18 –	April-June issue
May 20 –	July-Sep issue
August 19 –	Oct-Dec issue

TIMETABLE

Compiled by JACK LUTZ

<alton_house@yahoo.com>

Because of US and Canadian restrictions on gatherings due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak, many events have been postponed or cancelled. Please check Websites for updated information.

CONVENTIONS

Oct 8-11, 2021: *NER Convention – Mill City 21*
Lowell, MA <www.millcity21.org>

SHOWS

Jan 30-31, 2021: *Amherst Rwy Society RR Hobby Show*,
West Springfield, MA <www.railroadhobbyshow.com>

Chris Carfaro is new Coupler Editor

Barely elected as the new Green Mountain Division superintendent, Chris Carfaro will also take on the role of *NER Coupler* editor, replacing retiring editor Jeff Paston effective with Coupler #280 (January-March, 2021).

Chris has been around the NER and NMRA model railroading community for



many years. He offers this introduction for those who haven't met him yet.

"In 1978, I was living in North Plainfield, New Jersey, and discovered model trains by accident. Looking into the hobby, I had heard that there was a model train club in Union, NJ, where the people were insane 'rivet counters.' It was *The Model Railroad Club, Inc.*, and indeed they were passionate. Well, I found my peeps!"

"Skipping through the years – New Jersey, New York City, Los Angeles – then 16 years ago, Vermont! And, here I am! Although my passion for the hobby has taken vacations as life demanded, today I find myself back, and at the head of the Green Mountain Division with interest renewed."

Virtual Convention Fills in for 2020 Gathering

For four evenings in December, the NER will partner with the NMRA Social Media Team to produce the *NERx virtual convention*.

On December 1-4 from 6:30-10:30 PM, Eastern Time, NERx will be unlike any other NER convention. We will feature layout tours and clinics from every division in the Region, making it a true region-wide convention. By being a "virtual convention," it opens up the possibility of visiting layouts in remote areas that normally would not be seen at an NER convention.

Anyone who would like to give a tour of a layout or present a clinic during NERx may send an email to the convention chair at convention_chair@nernmra.org.

In addition to the clinics and layout tours, we will also have model and photo contests. And, sprinkled in between the activities every evening, the NER will recognize the Achievement Program accomplishments in the past year, special awards, and contest winners.

As with NMRax activities of this past summer, the NERx convention can be "attended" on Facebook and/or YouTube at no charge.

To keep informed of the schedule of events and how to participate in NERx, look



for future *Constant Contact* emails, Facebook, or check the MillCity21.org Website.

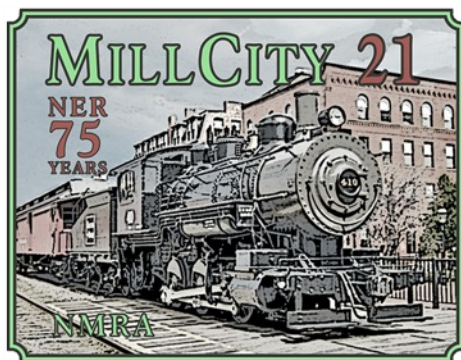
We are fortunate that the entire *Mill City 2020* team was understanding and supportive when the face-to-face convention had to be cancelled because of the virus pandemic. They will continue the planning to bring an even better event Oct. 8-11, 2021, once we can all gather together safely.

All of the layout owners that were hosting operating sessions and open houses have been contacted, and most of them are on board for next year. It is a bit difficult to pin down schedules this far in advance, but it looks like all of the same operating sessions will be available and the layout tour schedule should not change much.

Clinic planning is also going forward with all of the clinicians indicating they are willing to wait until 2021 to formalize presentations. Tours will be held as originally planned and the boats and trolleys in Lowell should be in full operation come next fall. George Selios has also indicated that as of now he plans to host us at his fabulous HO scale *Franklin & South Manchester* layout next year.

So, it is full speed ahead with the planning for the *Mill City 21* Northeastern Region convention now being held during the Region's 75th anniversary year.

– Chuck Diljak and Dave Insley



Rollout of New NER Website Expected During October

The long awaited overhaul of the NER Website is planned for an October introduction. Viewers will notice a new look and feel, new features, updated content, and an overall better user experience.

Some of the new features include:

- Picture Slider on selected pages
- The ability to change text size to help readability
- Quick Launch Buttons to key pages within the Website

- A reorganized Menu
- Member ONLY content
- Site Search
- Site Map

Above left is a sample of what the new Home Page will look like. Of course, this is still a work in progress and the color scheme will likely be a bit different. But, you can see the site has a cleaner appearance and better organization.

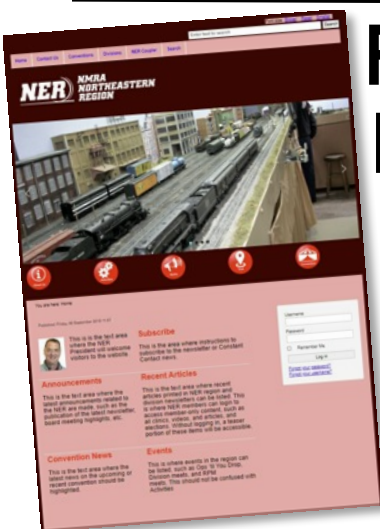
The main menu is at the top of the Web page for easy access. Above the menu is the new search feature, allowing you to search the Website for content. Above the search bar is the new Font Resizer feature for those that need the Website's text to be a little bigger for less of a strain on the eyes.

Below the menu is the *Picture Slider*. This will appear on select pages and have appropriate images for that page.

Finally, you'll find the Web page content. Obviously, this will depend on the page you are viewing.

The second image shown here is the sample *NER Coupler* library. Each *NER Coupler* is organized by year of publication and has a thumbnail of the cover page.

I hope this small preview of the new NER Website will bring you to the site at nernmra.org for its release later in October. – David Abrames, NER Webmaster



HUB's John Lutz, 1941-2020

John Lutz, of South Hamilton, MA, for many years an enthusiastic member of the NMRA and the HUB Division in the Boston area, passed away on July 22 at age 79 from Alzheimer's disease.

John served as division Membership Chair, and was responsible for a program called *Ops Sessions for Beginners* – introducing the joys of operations to many newbies in the NMRA.

A licensed civil engineer and project manager, John was a Navy ROTC scholar at Cornell University, a Rutgers University MBA, Navy Seabee, and Eagle Scout.

He was a devoted volunteer at the Wenham (MA) Museum's model railroad program. In his quiet way, John always looked for opportunities to connect people – particularly the younger generation – to the joys and fellowship of model railroading. – John Doebring



(John was not related to Jack Lutz, who provides the NER Coupler Timetable.–Ed)

Adding a Video Camera in G Scale

A Real View From the Cab

Tom Narrigan

By CHRIS CARFARO
Green Mt. Div. Superintendent

Model railroading combines many skills that call people to the hobby. For me, I enjoy electronics, illusion and animation. This of course has caused some friends to question my sanity, but nuts like me can be handy. I work at Tony's Train Exchange in Essex Junction, Vermont, doing DCC installations in large scale locomotives. Recently, a request for the typical sound, lights and action of a DCC installation also included a request to install a forward facing video camera. The customer wanted to enjoy his layout by way of his television and a video seat in the cab. Thus it was "game on" for me!

Adding a camera into a G scale locomotive is certainly easier than into an O, HO, or N scale unit. However, it still presents a unique challenge. The locomotive is a USA Trains SD70 MAC. The decoder is a Soundtrax Tsunami2 Large Scale 4400 series, and the camera... Well, time to break new ground!

I was familiar with drones and video capture, but had no practical experience. Soon, I was on the phone with Shawn at GetFPV.com, a leading Internet-based drone retailer. The gentleman was excited about the project.

Although he could have sold me some great equipment, instead he gave me advice. He said to bypass the radio control avenue and check out mini security camera products. His feeling was that a "First Person View" (FPV) camera may not be best for a home railroad in that it's analog video isn't nearly as good as what's available with WiFi, which gives true high definition video.

A DCC SURPRISE!

I found his suggested camera, a Wyze Cam, at Home Depot for \$25 and got to work. The first obstacle to tackle was how to get it to run on track power. Many model railroaders are familiar with DCC. What you may not know is that DCC electricity carried along the rails to our locomotives is *not* DC but AC. *Surprise!*

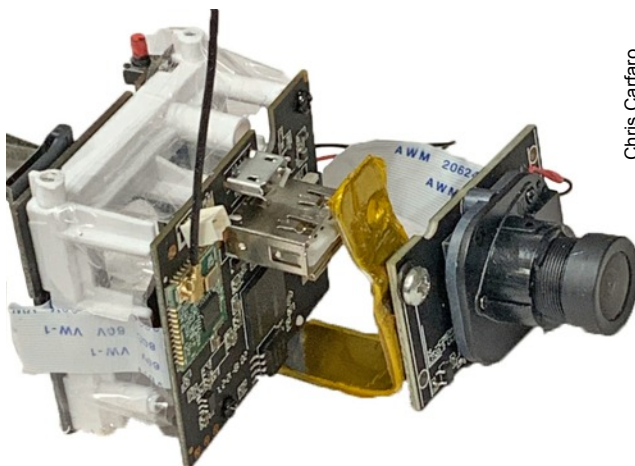
A DCC decoder takes that power and

converts it into DC to run motors, lights, and more. That said, I needed to get 5 volts DC for the camera from either the decoder or the track. I can tell you right now, that if it were an ESU Loksound brand decoder, this part would be solved. Some of the ESU and TCS decoders come with a 5 volt DC output on the board. With a Soundtrax decoder in play, I chose to take power from the common(+) and ground(-) on the decoder and run it into an automotive 12 volt DC to 5 volt DC power adapter for dash cams. Power source, solved!

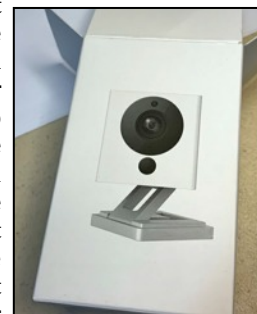
Next, the camera needed to not just fit, but to be positioned to give an awesome cab window view. I've got this, I thought. I figured, "hey, let's disassemble the camera and make it work." And yes, it did disassemble and did work, but lessons learned are to be shared. First, don't take anything apart unless you have to. I had disassembled the camera from the housing, then the camera into its respective components. You can see where this is going.

The photo at left shows the camera after its disassembly and reassembly, probably attempt number 2 or 3. Still, I wasn't getting the angle out of the window I needed.

(Continued on page 6)



Chris Carfaro



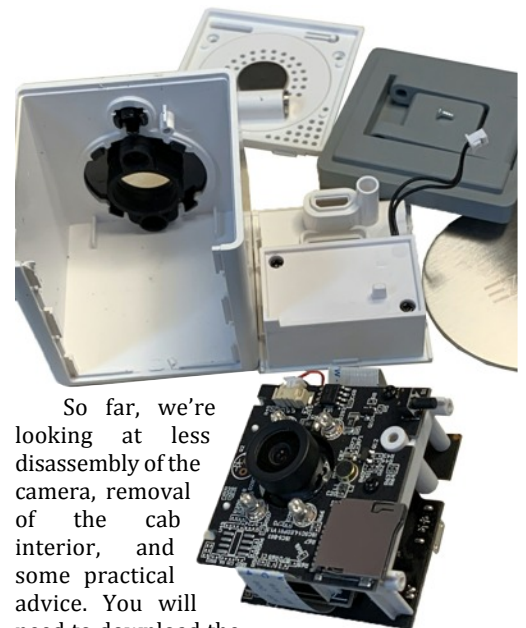
A Real View From the Cab



(Continued from page 5)

It was time to make some sacrifices. I gave up on the crew and interior detail of the cab.

It's nice, but leads to very difficult space restrictions. Leave yourself a way to press the reset button and to hear the speaker. Yes, the camera will talk to you - similar to a TCS decoder, and you will need to hear the voice prompt such as "press the reset button." Also, be gentle with the antenna. If you tear the adhesive strip, you've just ruined the antenna.



So far, we're looking at less disassembly of the camera, removal of the cab interior, and some practical advice. You will need to download the app for the Wyze Cam onto your smart phone so you can name the cam, select what WiFi network is to be used as well as other settings. It may sound tricky, but since the camera app is relatively intuitive to use, it turned out to be easy.

FINISHING INSTALLATION

Putting it all together, your locomotive is opened up, you've gutted the cab for space, disassembled the camera, and downloaded the app onto your phone.

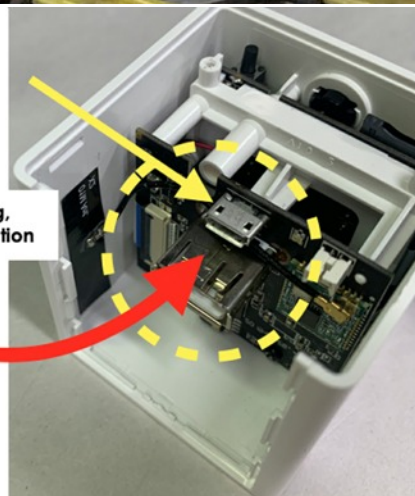
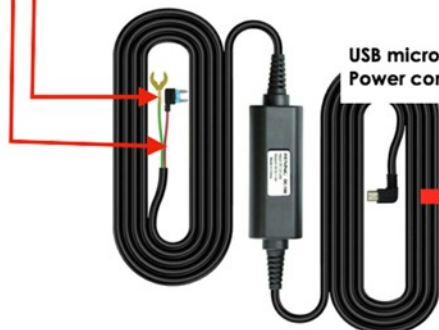
To provide power, I connected the two bare wires on the automotive DC/DC converter to the decoder's common hookup(+) and ground(-). Coming out of the other end of the automotive DC/DC converter is a USB micro plug which will simply plug into the back of the camera. Now before you close this all up, it's best to power up the camera and get used to the app on your phone.

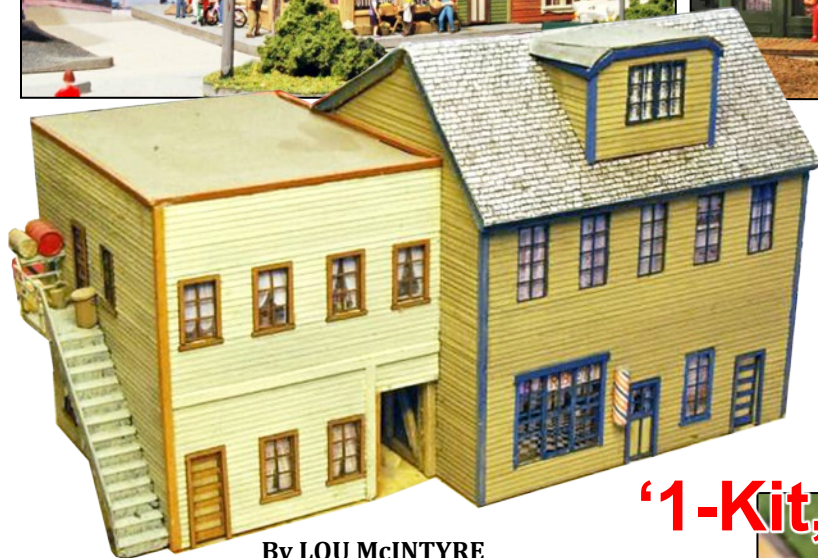
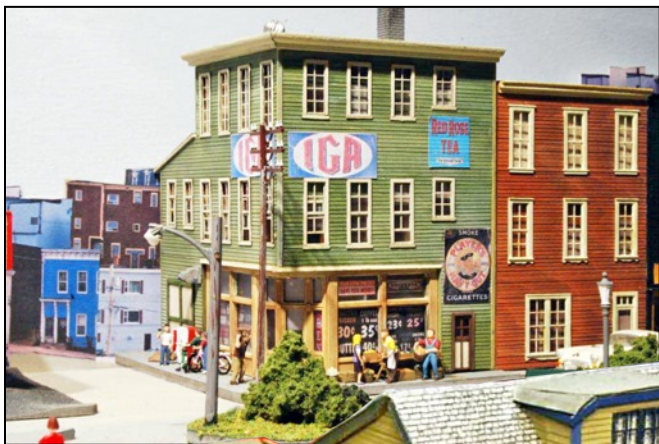
The phone app and the camera itself, will guide you through the connection process. Shortly thereafter, you'll adjust the camera's location and angle because your phone will be giving you eyes from inside the cab. 🚂

U+ common
ground (-)

DCC Decoder

USB micro plug,
Power connection





A Bar Mills Kit for Many Projects '1-Kit,' Multiple Buildings

By LOU MCINTYRE

Photos by the Author

From the June 2020 ECD Hot Box

The "1-Kit" from Bar Mills Models is a collection of interchangeable parts that allows a modeler to build a wide variety of clapboard buildings. It's not kitbashing, where a set of parts are provided to build a pre-designed structure. Instead, the 1-Kit parts are not designed with any predetermined result in mind.

My idea for the IGA® market was based on a Bar Mills kit, but instead using 1-Kit parts. My St. Martins station, which you may find resembles the narrow gauge stations of the Sandy River & Rangeley Railroad as in Phillips, Maine. The other buildings illustrated are based on historic photos of St. Martins, NB.

The siding, and the majority of windows and doors, I used in all of these buildings used the materials in the 1-Kit. The kit comes with a variety of doors and windows that fit in the openings you choose.

The trick is Bar Mills uses laser cutting technology to cut *almost* all the way through the siding from the back. You pick the size of opening you want and lightly score the lines to go all the way through the siding. The kit has several two-storey wall panels supplied.



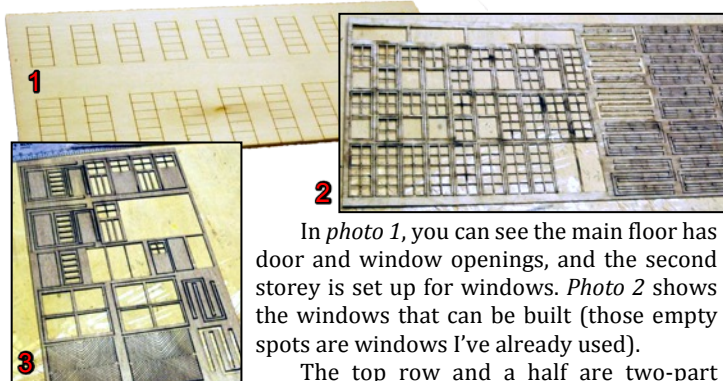
– whatever you wish. The right side of the sheet provides all of the window trim.

The third main sheet (photo 3) has up to four styles and sizes of doors. Each door is made up of two parts that lay over one another to highlight panels.

All of the parts are accurately made to fit precisely in the openings. As you can see from these model photos, the variety of buildings is limited only to your imagination. The package also comes with an extensive instruction and idea booklet.

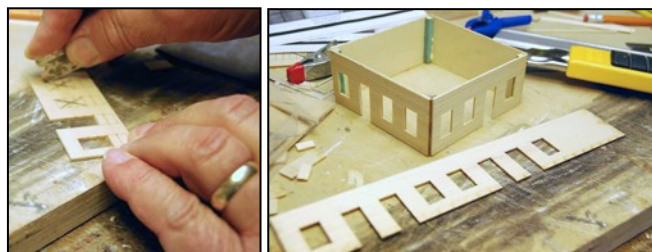
In the interest of full disclosure, the largest window and door units, such as the main level of the hardware store and IGA® are from Rix Products' *Smalltown USA* line. 🚚

Lou McIntyre is editor of the Eastern Canada Division Hot Box newsletter. Lou confesses that he's been using "1-Kit" for the last 15 years to "semi-scratchbuild" many of the structures for his H0 scale Hampton & St. Martins Railway.



In photo 1, you can see the main floor has door and window openings, and the second storey is set up for windows. Photo 2 shows the windows that can be built (those empty spots are windows I've already used).

The top row and a half are two-part vertical sliders. One part is the fixed upper sash and outer frame, and the other is the slider that can be positioned anyway you want – open, closed, or part way. The bottom half of this sheet are fixed-pane windows that can be cut to 2, 4, 6, 8, or 10 panes



Here, the 1-Kit is used to build a motel. The photo, *above left*, is the office wall with a door and window already cut out. The *right* photo shows the office assembled along with the front side of the motel units cut out – all done in less than an hour.



Showing Off a Model "Name Train"

The 'Capitol Limited' Tours

By **SCOTT DUNLAP**

Photos by the Author

It's June 1957, and the latest version of the Baltimore & Ohio's *Capitol Limited* is on a promotional tour. After traveling as far east as Hoboken, New Jersey, today it will be heading west to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, along the right-of-way of the Hudson, Delaware and Ohio. The HD&O Railroad is the freelanced HO line of The Model Railroad Club of Union, NJ, and theoretically runs from Hoboken to Pittsburgh to link with the B&O.

The B&O is the HD&O's most important connection as it provides

its gateway to the west. In Pittsburgh, both freight and passenger cars are interchanged between the two roads. After spending the evening at the station in Gilberton, PA, the *Capitol Limited* will soon be ready to continue its journey.

WOULD THIS REALLY HAPPEN?

It might seem a bit far-fetched that a passenger train from one railroad would do a publicity tour on another's right of way – even a friendly connection. But it did indeed happen. One example was in 1956 when the Santa Fe introduced the latest version of its high level all-coach Chicago-Los Angeles *El Capitan*. Before officially entering service on July 8th, one of the new train sets made a press tour on the B&O that took it as far east as Washington, DC. In the 1930s, both Union Pacific and Burlington introduced new streamlined trains on a tour of the New York Central and other railroads.

Of all of the premier passenger trains of the 1950s, none was more eclectic than the B&O's flagship. Old heavyweights with clerestory roofs, modernized heavyweights, smooth-sided lightweights, fluted stainless steel cars, and semi-stainless steel cars were all part of the mix at one time or another.

For years, it was not possible to satisfy a long-standing desire for an accurate, mid-1950s era model of either the *Capitol Limited* or the *National Limited*. Unfortunately, both trains ran with several cars that were unique to the B&O and not available commercially except for some in brass. And, as it turns out, some weren't even available in brass, leaving scratch building or kit bashing as the only option.

MODELING THE CAPITOL LIMITED

It was very pleasing when Walther's announced that it would produce *Capitol Limited* models in HO a few years ago. Before making



Top of page, The *Capitol Limited* passes through Ashland, PA, on the HD&O without breaking stride. This gives a good view of the train's consist.

Above, the pride of the B&O enters the triple-track tunnel leading to the Pittsburgh passenger and freight facilities.

Below, the 'Cap' lingers a bit at Jim Thrope, PA, so that curious railfans can get a longer look.





on The Model Railroad Club's Layout the 'Hudson, Delaware & Ohio'

any purchase, some serious research was required. There was a need to figure out what cars would be required and how many. To do that, it was important to decide what era and which segment of the run would be recreated. The consist that ran east of Washington to Jersey City was very different than the one that ran west to Chicago.

Choosing between modeling a consist east of Washington versus west of Washington was pretty easy. West of Washington, the *Capitol Limited* was an all-Pullman luxury train; eastbound was just another train on the *Royal Blue Line* that happened to have a few sleeper cars. Some have referred to the train west of D.C. as "the real *Capitol Limited*."

When conducting research, one of the best sources was an April 1957 reprint of an official B&O Transportation Department book describing through passenger train consists. These books show what cars were in each train, the segment of the line on which they ran, and the order of placement within the train. *Official Railway Guides* from the period were also very useful. Three books, in particular, were referenced: *B&O Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment* by Craig T. Bossler; *Baltimore & Ohio Passenger Service, 1945-1971 - Volume 2* by Harry Stegmaier; and *Baltimore & Ohio's Capitol Limited and National Limited* by Joe Welsh.

The Joe Welsh book contained the complete consist of the eastbound *Capitol Limited* that ran on February 14, 1955. It included not only the exact car types but the car names and numbers as well. It was this information that influenced which car models to purchase.

THE 1957 CAPITOL LIMITED

With these new cars added to a couple of heavyweights, a 10-5 sleeper, and some E units already owned, it was possible to create a fairly accurate train. The *Capitol Limited* was typically assigned the best and newest passenger locomotives available. In 1957, those were the E-8s and the E-9s.

Later on, twin diner sets and newer semi-stainless steel 10-6 sleepers that

(Continued on page 10)



The touring *Capitol Limited* makes a brief stop in Bellefonte – the last one before Pittsburgh.



The B&O's *Capitol Limited* and the HD&O's premier train, *Three Rivers*, sit side by side in Gilberton Station waiting to depart.

The 'Capitol Limited' Tours the HD&O

(Continued from page 9)

the railroad obtained in 1957 became available from Walthers. They were added as well. Now, the *Capitol Limited* from 1955 to 1958 and beyond could be created. With the addition of the new cars, the train featured in this article is based on the June 1957 edition as it ran from Washington to Pittsburgh.


SWITCHING THE CAPITOL LIMITED

At one time, online switching of passenger trains was quite extensive. The westbound *Capitol Limited* as it was normally made up in April 1957 began its journey from the Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal in Jersey City and consisted of eight cars – a coach-lounge, three coaches, a diner, an 8-4 parlor, a 16-4 sleeper, and finally, a 14-4 sleeper. In Philadelphia, a storage mail car was added and placed behind the locomotives every day except on Mondays.

After arriving at Union Station in Washington, all of the cars, except for the two sleepers, were pulled from the consist. One of the coaches was transferred to the *Columbian*, while the rest remained in

D.C. The *Columbian* was at one time B&O's all-coach streamlined train that would leave Washington shortly after the *Capitol Limited* and follow it to Chicago. In 1957, however, it was combined with the Detroit-bound *Ambassador* as far as Willard, Ohio. (To see how the *Capitol Limited*, *Columbian*, and *Ambassador* were related to each other, refer to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Network Website <borail.net/Pass.html>. Other key B&O trains, including the *National Limited*, are also covered.)

Before departing Washington, 10 cars were added to the *Capitol Limited*'s consist. The train was then set up as follows: a baggage-dorm-lounge car, the 16-4 and 14-4 sleepers from Jersey City, a 12-1 sleeper, a 5-1-3 dome sleeper, twin diners, four 10-6 sleepers, and an observation-lounge. In Pittsburgh, a 10-5 sleeper was added and placed in front of the observation car.

One train, three consist changes, 20 different cars, and only two that made the entire trip from Jersey City to Chicago. 



Here is the consist of the 1957 *Capitol Limited*:

Photo 1 On the left is the *Silver Spring*, a baggage-dorm-lounge car. On the right, the *Wren* is one of the new stainless steel 16-4 sleepers purchased from Budd in 1954. **Photo 2** The prototype *Capitol Limited* ran with a 14-4 sleeper, but Walthers doesn't make one, so a 10-5 is in its place. Next is the *Moonlight Dome*, one of three 5-1-3 sleepers that the B&O acquired from the Chesapeake and Ohio in 1951. Notice the icebreaker mounted on the front of the car to protect the dome and the lights used to illuminate the scenery at night. For our promotional tour, a Santa Fe sleeper and B&O modernized heavyweight sleeper were not included in the consist. Both cars were placed between the 14-4 sleeper and the dome car. **Photo 3** The kitchen dormitory and full diner are one of two sets originally built by Pullman for the C&O. Both sets were sold to the New York Central and later resold to the B&O. **Photo 4** The *Kingfisher*, another 16-4 sleeper, the *Allegheny*, one of the newest 10-6 sleepers just purchased from the C&O, and the *Shenango*, another 10-6 sleeper. **Photo 5** Bringing up the rear are the *Tygart*, another 10-6 sleeper, and the *Wawasee*, a 5 DB-buffet-observation car, one of four purchased from the C&O in 1951. The prototype *Tygart* is on display at Baltimore's B&O Museum.



A Shopping Center for an N Scale Layout

Opting for a 3D Printed 'Scratch-Built' Structure

By **JEFF PASTON**
NER Coupler Editor
 Photos by the Author

A number of years ago, it was debated by the NMRA contest folks about whether 3D printed models are actually "scratch built." It was resolved that indeed they are. The conclusion was that it takes a lot of time and effort to make a 3D printed model as to do it the "old way!" So, as the pandemic lockdown afforded more time for modeling, it was time to get back to putting my N scale coffee table layout back together.

The layout was featured in *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman* in 1978 and 1980, respectively. Not being a great woodworker, a model railroading acquaintance and highly skilled cabinet maker, Jim Butler, agreed to rebuild the coffee table in 1985. It *should not* have taken very long to put everything back into the layout after the table rebuild.

But 35 years later, the project is crawling "forward" at a snail's pace. So, as time now permitted, a supermarket on the old layout could now be upgraded to a shopping center – a centerpiece of the rebuilt railroad!

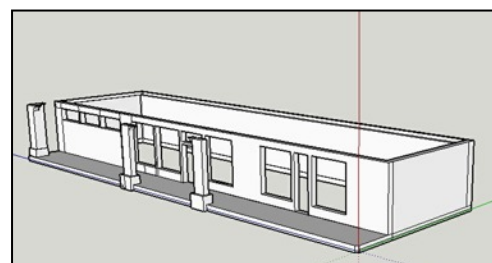
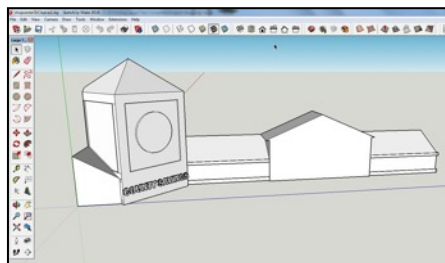
So the question became whether the new complex be constructed on a 3D printer, or the 'old way' by cutting and fitting and gluing styrene plastic sheets?"

For the record, I have concluded that there is no real benefit of using a 3D printer to build complete structures. While not a truly scientific conclusion, it seems to have taken just as much – if not more – time as if I cut and fit and glued parts individually. But, since I was mentally committed to using a 3D printer available at a local library, the shopping center project moved forward.

I used *Sketchup* software to visually create my model. I first located an architectural rendering of a shopping center I liked. From that, I drew my three-dimensional model version using N scale dimensions.

Then, I had to break down the project into component parts to fit on the 3D printer, and to ensure a way to create overhangs. Keep in mind, the the printer cannot bridge empty spaces, such as between front walls and pillars. So, that meant more drawings!

After converting the *Sketchup* drawings to a file the printer could recognize, all of the



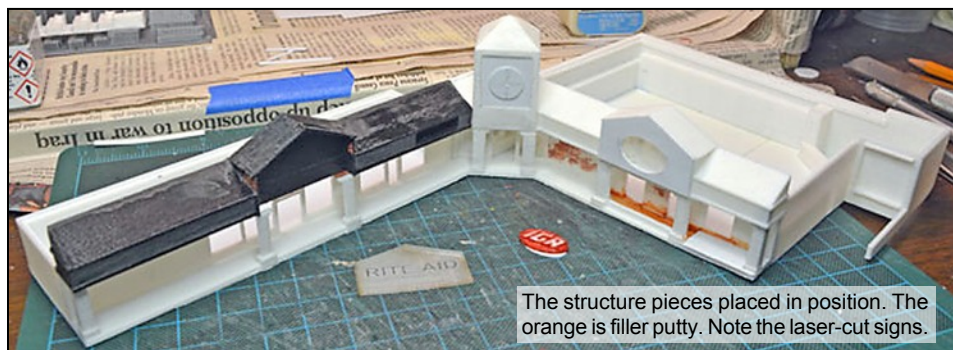
parts printed out in an excruciatingly long period of time.

The good thing about 3D printed models is that everything can be aligned during the drawing process. The finished parts did indeed align well. And, some liquid plastic cements can be used with certain plastic filaments available.

But, there are a number of downsides. The walls are not necessarily "smooth" as 3D printers lay individual layers of material.

Smoothness is dependant on how good of a printer and of what materials are used (The library supplied only PLA plastic filament, which does not necessarily provide the best results). While I sanded some walls, I found that using a high quality brick paper on front facades and scribed styrene on roofs solved much of the the "smoothness" issue.

I made some interior furnishings for the stores on the 3D printer and from scraps of
(Continued on page 12)



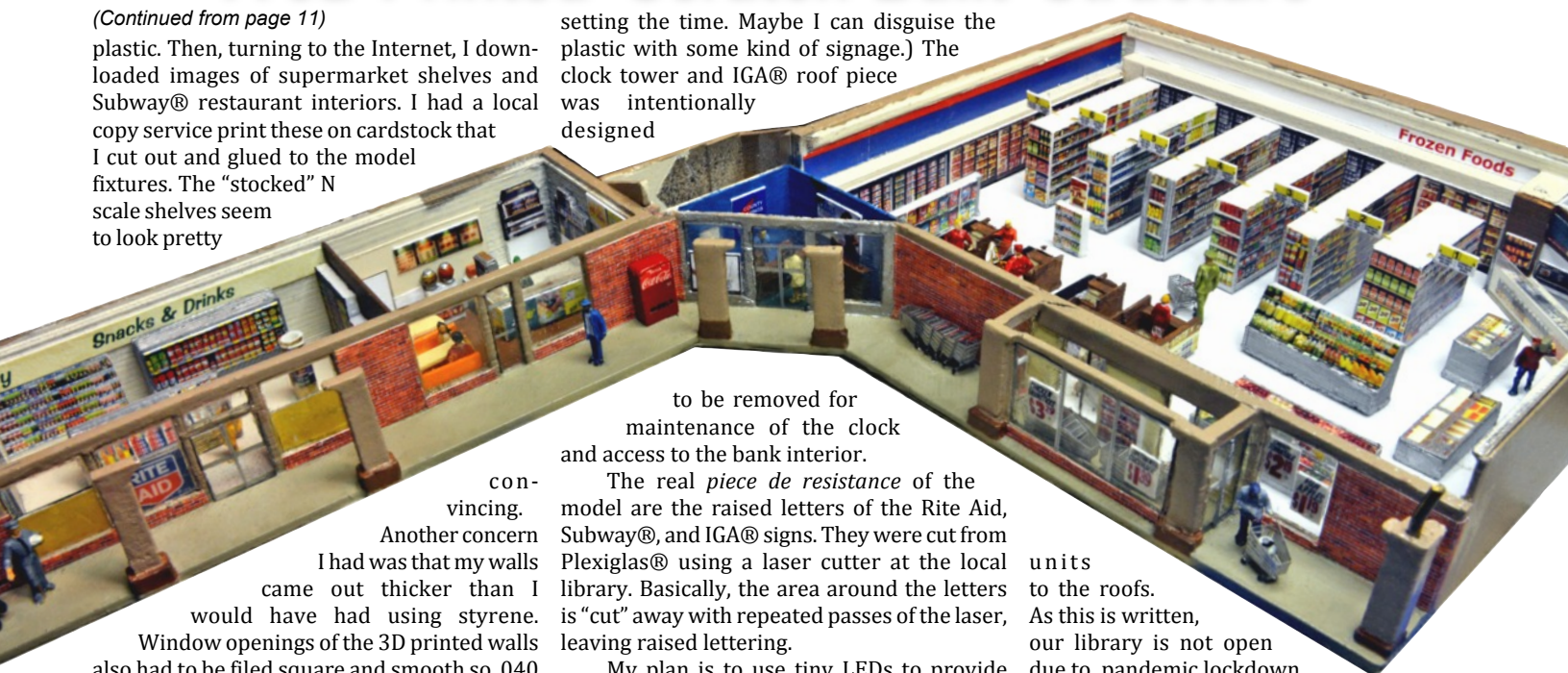


A 3D Printed 'Scratch-Built' Structure

(Continued from page 11)

plastic. Then, turning to the Internet, I downloaded images of supermarket shelves and Subway® restaurant interiors. I had a local copy service print these on cardstock that I cut out and glued to the model fixtures. The "stocked" N scale shelves seem to look pretty

setting the time. Maybe I can disguise the plastic with some kind of signage.) The clock tower and IGA® roof piece was intentionally designed




to be removed for maintenance of the clock and access to the bank interior.

The real *piece de resistance* of the model are the raised letters of the Rite Aid, Subway®, and IGA® signs. They were cut from Plexiglas® using a laser cutter at the local library. Basically, the area around the letters is "cut" away with repeated passes of the laser, leaving raised lettering.

My plan is to use tiny LEDs to provide light behind the signs just as such lettering is displayed on prototype shopping centers. The deadline for this issue of *NER Coupler* did not allow time to complete this.

Also delayed is adding 3D printed HVAC

units to the roofs. As this is written, our library is not open due to pandemic lockdown precautions in our area.

While I can see using 3D printing to create architectural features and detail parts, I probably would not do an entire structure this way again. It was a fun project, but I think that using sheet styrene would have provided satisfactory results far more quickly. 

NEW MEMBERS
Compiled By **MARK HARLOW**
NER Office Manager

As of 8/1/20

<p>NOVA SCOTIA Jim Cripps</p> <p>MASSACHUSETTS Robert Collins Logan Collins John Kelly</p>	<p>NEW JERSEY James Ott</p> <p>NEW YORK Anthony DeVincenzo Anthony Valukis Andreas Werder</p> <p>VERMONT Brett Stankiewicz</p>
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IF YOU LOOK HARD ENOUGH, THERE'S A PROTOTYPE FOR EVERYTHING

By ED O'ROURKE
NER Western Area Director

This is not an article justifying some weird model I put on my layout. Rather, the title means that whatever you are modeling, the prototype could have existed. Photos – and possibly plans – likely exist that will help you with your modeling. Recently, two photos were shown to me seeking information on their locations. But for me, I wondered what modeling ideas the pictures revealed.

In the unidentified photo of an Interurban along a country highway, *above*, we surmised that this is probably the late 1930s by the condition of the highway (note the curbing), the fact this is a steel car, the overgrown right-of-way, the age of the auto (appears to be a late 30s model), and the fact that this is a color slide, which would be unusual prior to that time. We can see that at one time there was double track judging by the line poles, although the wire for the inside track and the rails appear to have been removed.

How could we use this scene as a basis for modeling? First of all, with many of us considering downsizing our housing as we age, we might consider a trolley model. There are a fair number of commercial models available, and one only needs one or two single cars to develop a credible operation. Trolleys used small radius curves as a matter of course to get into tight places. Trolley operations could be quite interesting, and the opportunities for scratch-building and super-detailing abound. The car in the photo has a space for an advertising poster on the front, which would add to the detail.

This could also be a scenic feature of a larger layout. With a loop of track or an auto-reversing unit, the trolley could enter and depart the scene on a schedule.

Bill Brown has modeled such an operation as part of the City of Denver on his Colorado-based layout. An interurban line could run as this

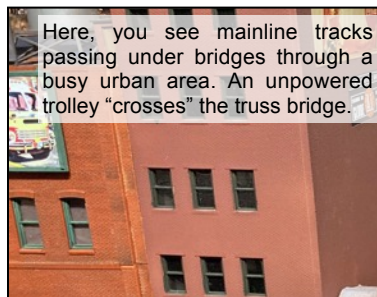
one does between a highway and a tree line at the back of a layout using the same principle, without consuming much real estate.

This could also be a static model, with a car stopped to load passengers at a small shelter or station. Or consider a line car stopped to work on the overhead. (Remember also that if the car can propel itself, it is "Motive Power," and good towards the AP award.) You could also simply lay the track and install the pole line and imply the service exists. In that case it could appear in this overgrown condition, without impeding running the car.

If your layout is set in a more modern era, you could model it as an abandoned line. The track and poles would likely be in place, though overgrown, but the trolley wire and supports might be gone. You could even model the line being scrapped, with a crane car and gondola pulling up the track and a line car taking down the wire. That would be an interesting scene for a diorama.

I used a trolley line crossing a bridge to hide the fact that the tracks pass through the backdrop on one end of my layout. In this case, the car is an unpowered toy. At this distance (three feet from the front of

(Continued on page 14)





There are lots of modeling ideas in this photo of an locomotive servicing facility.

CNY NRHS collection

THERE'S A PROTOTYPE FOR EVERYTHING

(Continued from page 13)

the layout), painted in the Connecticut Company' Canary Yellow and White, it fulfills its function without needing to be highly detailed.

In the engine service photo, we have what appears to be a 2-8-0 taking on water at a small sized engine service facility. It is possible to make out the "Pennsylvania" lettering on the tender, which, along with the Belpair firebox, identifies the railroad. The coal pocket is an interesting design, evidently of wood construction. It would make a great scratch building project. There is a hopper sitting in the coal delivery shed. The loco appears to be on the same track. There is what appears to be a walkway up the side of the structure. Piping runs out of the building in front of the tower (note the patched roof), which may mean it is a sand drying shed. Sand and coal would be delivered from the same structure. There are other railroad related structures further back.

The overhead truss structure may carry piping or utilities over the tracks, or it could be an employee footbridge (or both). There is no water tank in evidence, so the water column may be fed from city water, or from a remote tank. One would think there must be an ash pit nearby. In the foreground, there is a tank with steps up to it, which may contain kerosene or fuel oil for switch heaters and/or switch lamps. Also some very disreputable looking drums and random small structures, as well as piles of ties. There is a pile of something (sand?) between the rails in the right foreground.


All of this could be modeled with either commercial structures and kits, or scratch built. The large background structures imply that this is an urban area.

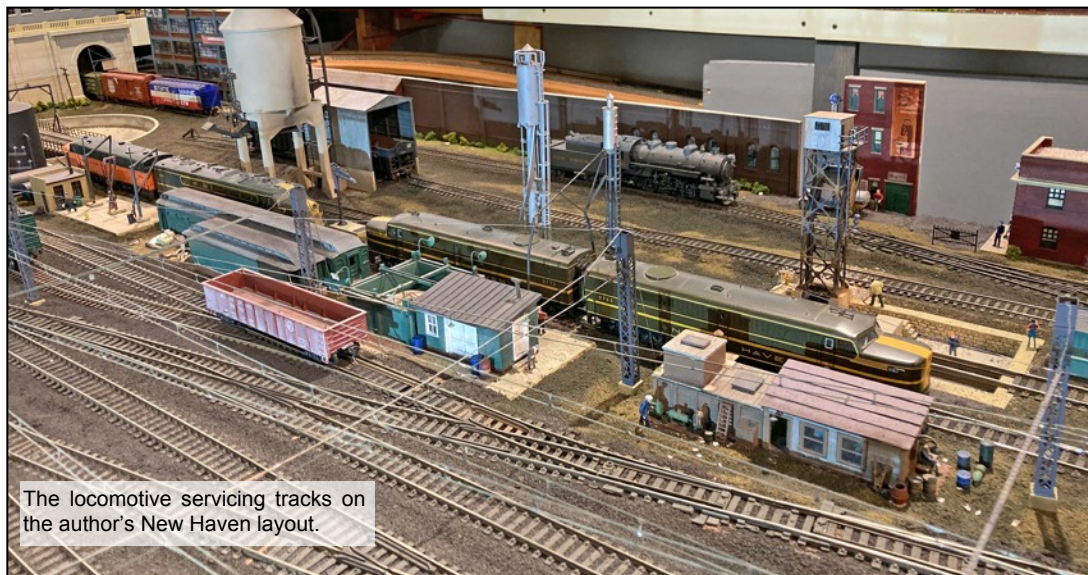
They could be modeled with flats or photos. The tanks on the right would be a great model, probably rail-served. It wouldn't take up a lot of space if placed against a backdrop or building flats. The horizontal tanks could be shortened to force perspective.

Note the amount of open space – difficult for us to create since we never have enough space. Even allowing for the black and white photo, the area is desolate and dirty with mud and puddles about, and almost complete lack of any weeds or vegetation – not surprising since railroads routinely sprayed with a mix of waste oil and weed-killer to keep weeds down and settle the dust.

The photo below shows my version of the engine service facility in New Haven, modeled after photos and drawings of the actual facility, although much compressed.

The combined ash pit and inspection pit, and the sand house and bin are scratch-built. Everything else is a modified kit. The facility serves diesel and steam. The diesel fuel tank and filler pumps are modeled as a newer addition to an existing steam service area in keeping with the prototype.

I hope this has given you some food for thought. One of the best places I have found to research prototype photos are the calendars put out each year by historical societies. The main subject of each photo is usually a loco or car, but if you look past that at the other details in such photos, the amount of information and inspiration you can find is amazing. 



The locomotive servicing tracks on the author's New Haven layout.

Ed O'Rourke

Creating the Unique

By **JEFF HANKE**

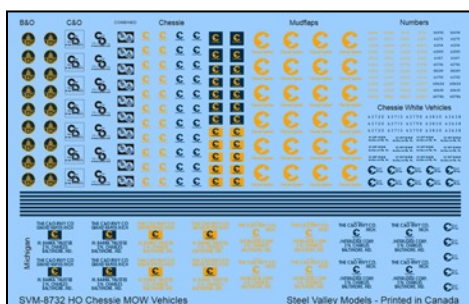
Generally, I am a huge fan of the common or the typical to create an accurate feel of the area and time in my model railroading. What I like to create is a series of believable scenes. For example, my 1982 vintage parking lots are filled with VW Beetles, Chevy pickup trucks, and the like. Sports cars and exotic foreign car sightings are as rare as seeing Big Foot. However, I must admit occasionally I bow to the unique. I admit



I am in the process of making a model of each of the 23 Chessie Safety Caboose, each with a unique paint scheme. To that end, I couldn't resist a new release of decals from *Steel Valley Models* (SVM).

SVM <www.facebook.com/SVMHopperTopper> has released a dozen sheets of Chessie decals that cannot be found anywhere else. Included in its releases are O, HO, and N scale freight car decals for hopper toppers, 100 ton hoppers, coil cars, auto parts boxcars, and a complete sheet of Chessie shop codes. They have also released C&O insulated boxcar decals.

Most recently, SVM added to its line up with a series of locomotive decals. These decals include several sheets of "oddball" Chessie power. Most are decals for the GP40-2



–the quintessential Chessie locomotive. The B&O, C&O, and WM rostered a staggering 348 of this type, about 15% of their 2,200 total units.

The releases that interested me the most were the sheets for the former AT&SF lease units. These include both Chessie and predecessor painted locomotives that were leased to the Santa Fe in the 1980s. The Santa Fe hastily renumbered them all into 9000 series numbers by changing the first digit to a "9" and keeping the rest the same. SVM offers

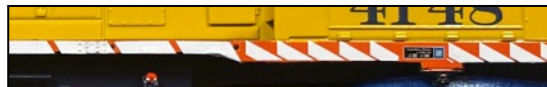
decals for locomotives in AT&SF service, wearing 9000-series numbers as well as units marked after return to Chessie use. When the Santa Fe renumbered the units back into the original Chessie numbers, it used its font for the first digit, making some unusually marked locomotives.

REFLECTIVE STRIPED UNITS

The final sheet released is for the four GP40-2 locomotives (4145-48) that were given experimental side sill reflective stripes and strobes in 1974. These reflective stripes were only applied to the vermilion side sill and were composed of a series of triangles and parallelograms. SVM also includes on this sheet decals for one unit in CSX service. I chose GP40-2 #4148 to test these decals. Unit

the door hinges. This is the true sign of a good decal when they look painted on.

The side sill provides the biggest challenge in making this project, and is the most noticeable compared to a "standard" marked GP40-2. I applied the stripe on each side in five pieces. The pieces were from the front to the builder's plate (triangles), from the builder's plate to where the sill narrows (triangles), the front narrow part of the sill (parallelograms), the back narrow part of the sill (parallelograms), and the back wide part of the sill (triangles). I cut all of the triangle pieces close to the white printed shapes. The parallelogram part of the stripe was cut close



to the white printed top, but 1/8" of clear decal was left on the bottom of the stripe. This allowed me to wrap that section of the decal around the bottom of the sill. With the sill being so narrow at this part of the locomotive,



4148 was the only reflective stripe unit in Santa Fe service and the only Santa Fe unit to have the complete road number repainted into Santa Fe's font upon return.


I started with an unnumbered Atlas® Phase I GP40-2. After swapping out the couplers to Kaydee, liquid masking the windows, adding the empty strobe brackets on the roof, putting on an ACI card, and painting the MU hoses, I sprayed the locomotive with Testors® Glosscoat. This provides a smooth surface for decaling. I started with the numberboards. I trimmed them to the size of the numbers, as the Atlas® numberboards are already black. I found the decals went on easily and were quite thin and tough. Next I applied the "B&O" and the "4148" on the cab. The "4148" is different on the two sides. The longer version is on the engineer's side, centered on the door. The shorter version is on the conductor's side, also centered on the door. This means the conductor's side is off center in relation to the "B&O" above it. With Micro Sol, the numbers settled down nicely over the irregularities of

wrapping the clear part around the bottom keeps the decal secure.

FINISHING THE DECALS

Once the decals were dry and covered with Testors® Dullcoat, I weathered the unit. The reflective stripes did not hold up well to use. The stripe pieces were shown to be peeled and faded in several prototype photos. I used SP Daylight Red paint to tone down the stripe and represent peeling. I also applied weathering pastels for soot and road grime. The weathering was sealed again with Dullcoat. I added the railings and sunshades to finish off the locomotive.

Overall, these decals create a very interesting unit full of unique features. It breaks up the string of standard Chessie units on my layout. I recommend occasionally bowing to a desire to create a one of kind locomotive, freight car, or caboose. But if your desire is to create that prototypical feel, keep these one offs to a minimum!

I look forward to sharing more on the new East End going forward, but until then... Keep on workin'. 





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