



December 1996

Volume XIX Number 6

DISPATCH

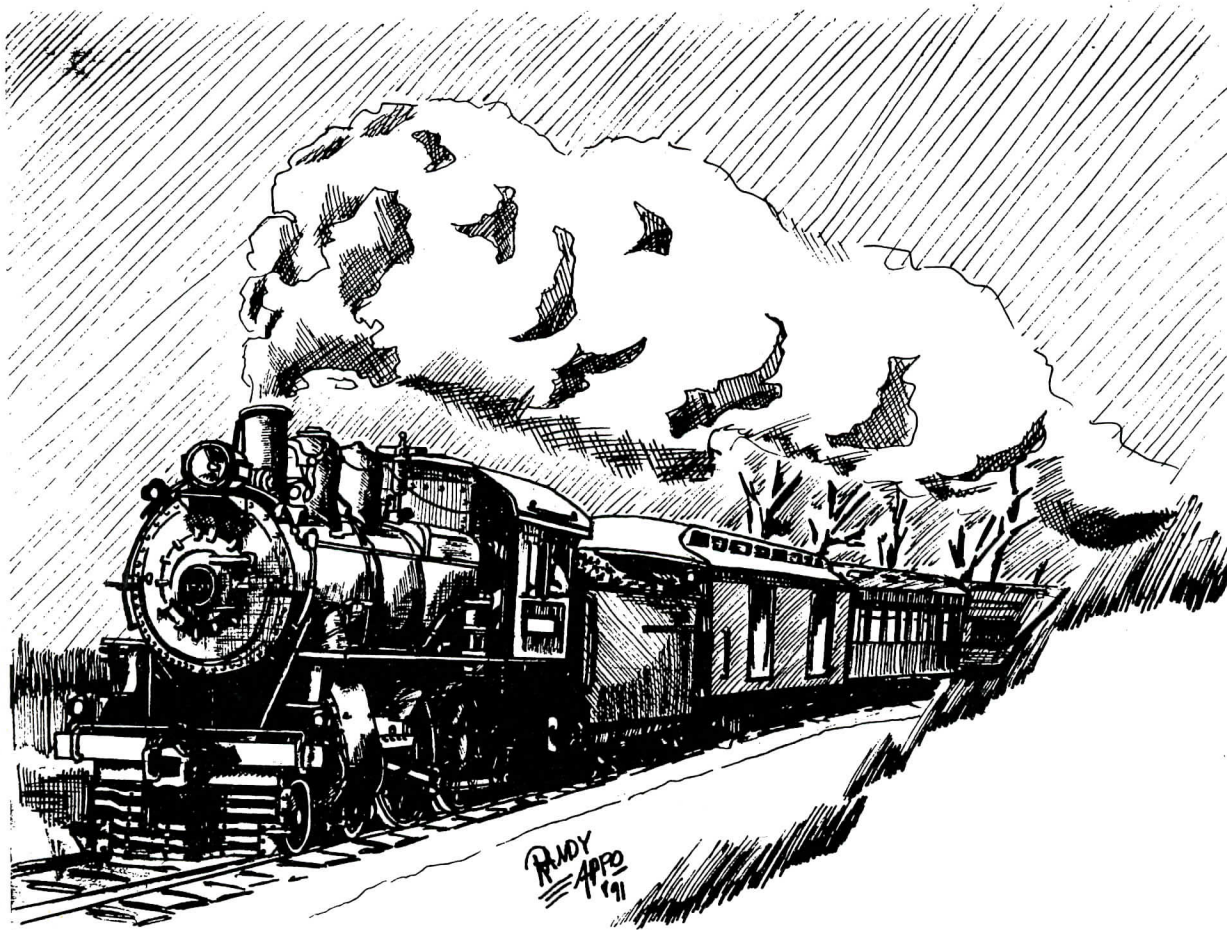


"Flyer Fantasy"

Angela Trotta Thomas

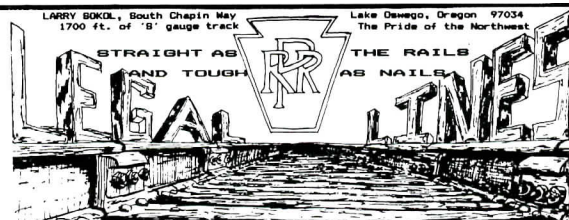
- Modifying An AF Uncoupler
- Denver Convention Preview
- S Pioneer - Robert L. Miller
- S-Track Plan
- Container Kitbash

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NASG DISPATCH

Official Publication of the
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
of S GAUGERS

The NASG **DISPATCH** welcomes art, photographs, letters, articles and other S-gauge-related materials contributed by the membership. Send all such materials to the editor:

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NASG membership runs from July through June, including all **DISPATCH** issues for the membership year, irrespective of enrollment date. All applications, renewals and membership questions should be directed to:

The Membership Secretary
NASG, Inc.
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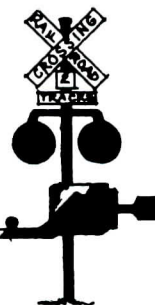
COVER:

Thomas is responsible for this nostalgic paitting which should arouse memories in us all.

ORDER BOARD

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THE DEADLINES for articles are the 1st of February, April, June, August, October and December for issues dated April, June, August, October, December, February, respectively.

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President's Message ...

Friends,

It's been interesting and educational exploring different sides of the "wide world of S" as the holidays approach.

In October I attended the National Toy & Hobby Show in Chicago. The NASG helped underwrite the cost of the Cuyahoga Valley Club taking their S scale modular layout to this show. Our reason for this stemmed from a request by the major S manufacturers (American Models, Des Plaines Hobbies, Bill's Train Shop, S Helper Service and River Raisin) to show hobby dealers and distributors a "full-blown" S scale layout including an Sn3 loop. Only current production/open stock S scale equipment could be run on the layout in order to allow hobby shop dealers to see first-hand what S scale trains they could add to their inventory. (This strong, subtle hint seemed to work as several dealers who stopped to observe the trains running asked questions about the products. The CVSG members obliged, along with suggesting the dealers talk to the S manufacturers in the nearby booths).

And since I was there as an "interested party," I was put to work. NASG Promotions Chairman George Ricketts was responsible for bringing the layout to Chicago and was operating a hand-held throttle throughout the show. The layout is set up for Digitrax DCC (the only one like it at the show, by the way, as the LGB, O gauge, HO and N layouts were operating with standard wired power supplies or transformers). I'd never run Digital Command Control (DCC), so I was given some quick OJT by the CVSG members (George, Don Richards, Kim Koschki and Bill Hanslik). I did OK, except I learned you can't operate a locomotive and look up to answer onlookers' questions, especially if two trains are on the same track or you are involved in switching operations.

Later I had an opportunity to operate DCC on Don's code 148 home layout, and other than punching the wrong button, I seemed to be improving steadily with this state-of-the-art

control system. I don't foresee installing this type of system on my small layout at Rocky Fork Printing, but using the DCC system has been an interesting experience.

In the meantime, I've been working on a long-promised home layout for Dale Williamson, a deaf member of the Central Ohio club. Dale has American Flyer equipment but doesn't have the skills or tools to construct a layout, so I've been helping him build it in his spare bedroom. Both Dale and his wife Bev are deaf, and unfortunately I've not done well learning sign language, so a notepad and pen are used a lot during layout building sessions.

Dale's layout is 5' x 9' with a green grass mat and Flyer track and switches. I know just enough about layout wiring to be dangerous, but most of that task is completed! He showed me Marshall McClintock's book *How to Build and Operate a Model Railroad* and wrote on the notepad that he wanted his two loops of track covered by a tunnel at one end. Our goal is to complete the tunnel by Christmas. At least now Dale and Bev have two completed loops of Flyer track in their apartment on which to operate an Atlantic and a Royal Blue Pacific.

This fall it has been fun participating in both aspects of S - from the modular scale layout wired with up-to-date command control, to the basic Flyer layout. And isn't this what the hobby is all about in the first place - to have fun with trains?

From seeing the puzzled look and answering questions of the people at the Chicago show to observing delight and joy on Dale and Bev's faces is the real satisfaction in this hobby. We're a diversified group of S gaugers encompassing both scale and hi-rail/American Flyer, but the idea that we operate either of them and have fun makes it worthwhile. Each S gauger has his own railroad empire, and we can respect his train ideas and have fun too!

Have a joyous holiday, and may you operate a train sometime during this season just to experience the fun!
-Alan

NEW NASG PROMOTIONS CHAIRMAN

George Ricketts, NASG Promotions Chairman, resigned effective November 1. He cited becoming editor of his train club's newsletter and more demands on him at his workplace as the main reasons for stepping down.

The new Promotions Chairman will be Joel Lebovitz of Chicago. He is currently president of the Chicagoland S Gauge Club and is also active in the NMRA.

We look forward to working with Joel and extend our thanks to George for his efforts during the last two years.

-Alan



HAPPY HOLIDAYS
FROM THE NASG AND THE STAFF
OF THE DISPATCH

RAIL MAIL

Newcomer's Questions: *I received via my son's E-Mail a series of questions from Art Armstrong of California who is switching from HO to S scale. I thought I'd relay them to you here in print so you could see the things a newcomer to S might want to learn about. - Jeff.*

Hello, I got your e-mail address from the June issue of the *Dispatch*. I am converting from HO to S and am busy gathering information. I have subscribed to the S/Sn3 magazine and have joined the NASG and sent letters requesting catalogs from everyone I heard of. I also have enlisted in Paul Yorkes' list, so I should have everything covered.

I am in contact with Big Boy's Toys in Palmdale, California, which apparently is my closest (200 miles) S scale supplier, and I am on the verge of making a deposit on one of the Southwind 2-8-0 imports.

To get to the point, I still have some questions and thought I would take advantage of the *Dispatch* e-mail address.

For building in S scale:

What couplers do modelers use? I have seen Kadee Couplers mentioned. Does Kadee make an S coupler, or do you use an HO coupler? I know the HO is somewhat oversize for HO but thought they might be just right for S.

The track gauge mentioned inside the back cover of the NASG *Dispatch* -- is it like the NMRA HO gauge (flat metal)? The one that is used for checking a lot of different track and wheel dimensions.?

What size rail is good for scale work (standard gauge)? I would guess code 100 would be similar to code 73 in HO,

and this seems like a good size.

At the National NMRA convention in Long Beach this year there was an Sn3 demonstration layout in one corner with a sound system. The display was automated, and the locomotive just ran back and forth without an operator. I think the company was PBL, but I can't find PBL ads anyplace. Is PBL the correct name? How can I find out more about the sound system - or any sound system?

My apologies if this is a little much. I know how tedious newcomers can be with too many questions. I have been in HO quite a while, but I am anxious to get started in S.

Thanks for your time - Art Armstrong aarmstro@slonet.org

Rail Mail continued on page 28

Jeff's Junction

The Last Builders' Scale

For this editorial let's forsake the American Flyer operator/collector end of S gauge and concentrate only on scale S and Sn3 - we can include realistic hi-rail here as well. Take a look at last issue's contest entries to see the very evidence from which I speak.

Even with all the wonderful ready to run and easy kit rolling stock and locomotives coming out in S, the gauge still remains a stepchild to all the other gauges when it comes to variety and availability of enough basic items to make a complete layout.

Of course, as more and more basic and affordable items such as rolling stock, locomotives, structures, bridges, track and switches becomes available, the wider the potential audience is for S gauge.

But while S is going through its growing pains, one way to win converts to the scale might be to promote it as the LAST BUILDERS' SCALE. We can promote the CHALLENGES instead of considering them negatives. Evidence the *Railmail* letter in this issue from Art Armstrong.

Sometimes you can tell that many of the other gauge modelers you meet are reaching out for a challenge. With so much RTR stuff out there in the other gauges, is it any wonder that some might look for some old-fashioned challenges which S can provide such as those listed below.

- Kitbashing structures from HO, O, etc.
- Kitbashing and detailing locomotives and rolling stock.
- Scratchbuilding anything.
- Handlaying track and switches.
- The challenge of designing a layout for a larger scale than N or HO.
- Building the new finely detailed wood laser structure kits.
- Scrounging for anything at S at the train meets and the hobby shops.
- The challenge of manufacturing anything in S or S narrow gauges.

So let's throw down the gauntlet to some of those other gaugers and newcomers and see if we can bring some modelers on the scale/hi-rail side of the S coin into the gauge on the basis of challenge.

And in order to do this, we need to make the rest of the model

community aware of what basic items - meaning primarily locomotives, rolling stock and track - are available in S and Sn3. We still have a long way to go in this communication department, and that is the challenge of the NASG, S manufacturers, S publishers and S modelers themselves.

One of the purposes of the NASG is to promote S and coordinate S activities, but the organization can also provide a family atmosphere to those modelers who take the plunge into the minority scale.

The S manufacturers have the challenge of actually funding and engineering their products which are immediately cast into a limited market. They also have the challenge of making the entire model railroad community aware of their products. Attending national (non-S and S) conventions and hobby shows is one way of spreading the product news. Another is advertising in S and non-S model railroad publications. New product releases, preferably with photos, need to be gotten to all publications possible - remember this is basically free advertising. E-mail is an up and coming method of inexpensive advertising.

S publishers need to provide a variety of articles which appeal to all levels of skills. They need, and usually do, provide a decent mix of articles on layouts, track planning, how-tos, new products, reviews and so on. And S publications (including the *Dispatch*) have the opportunity to make S gaugers feel special - because there are so few of us. The larger general publications can't do this anymore - for them it's mass appeal and mass advertising.

And plain old S gaugers can do their share of promoting the challenge of S by INFILTRATING. One way of doing this would be to attend non-S specific NMRA functions and showing off S. Show off by building a diorama. Get your club or group to build an S modular or portable layout and operate it at train shows or conventions. Enter S models in non-S only NMRA type contests. Send in articles on your layout or models to the non-S publications. Even dragging over a couple of detailed American Models GP9s to your friend's HO layout on operating night is a subtle way of infiltrating. And "brow beat" your local hobby shop into stocking some S.

So the challenges are twofold. We want to challenge other gauge modelers or newcomers to take up S — just grab hold of an HOer by the collar and ask him if he'd like to try a scale where everything doesn't just fall off the shelf and turn itself into a layout. And we want to challenge ourselves to come out of the closet and let everyone else know S is up and coming.

-Jeff

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

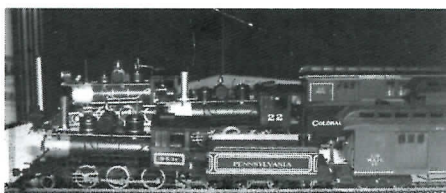
By Jeff Madden

AMERICAN MODELS (10087 Industrial Dr., South Lyon, MI 48178). Another surprise coming from AM will be a 4-bay steam-diesel era hopper. (Like Athearn's HO one) It will come in both offset and rib side versions. All road names will have 4 number variations available - \$33.95 ea. Road names to come are - offset: B&O, C&O, IC, NH, MP, Peabody, RI, SF, WM and undec; Ribside: BN, CB&Q, C&NW, CR, CSX, D&RGW, GN, PRR, UP and undec.

Also expected in '97 are the PS-2 CD 3-bay hoppers, F7 B units, SD60s and the steam engines.

BACHMANN (1400 East Erie Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19124). A real surprise coming from Bachmann about a year from now is the new On30 scale RTR narrow gauge passenger sets. These sets designed to look like Colorado narrow gauge prototypes include a 2-6-0 mogul with tender and two shorty passenger cars. The passenger cars in each set include a combine and a coach. These plastic injection molded sets are designed to go along with the popular ceramic Christmas villages and will run on HO track.

But the sets should create some real interest in S standard gaugers. They should be perfect kitbashing fodder because the drivers on the mogul would only have to be widened about 3/16" to convert to S standard, and the coaches could be re-trucked. Going down to Sn3 probably would probably require a lot more cutting and splicing of the locomotives and cars, but standard gauge proportions would probably be close. Locos will have a can motor, operating headlight and all metal wheels. The sets will come decorated in PRR, C&S or Wonderland Express and will sell for \$175.00 each.



BUILDING & STRUCTURE CO. (P.O. Box 1296, Fenton, MO 63026) has a wooden interior that can be applied to the River Raisin auto boxcars. The interior kit consists of scribed laser wood with a peel and stick backing. Included are floor, side and end walls. Designed for 50' cars, they can easily be cut down for 40' cars. Part No. 4069L is \$15.95 plus \$1.50 S&H.

BERLYN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS (P.O. Box 9766, Denver, CO 80209) will soon have a brass import of the narrow gauge D&RGW "long" caboose. These will be factory painted and will be limited; \$295.00 each.

CABOOSE INDUSTRIES (1861 Ridge Dr., Freeport, IL 61032) has added contacts and selectable end fittings to their HO ground throws which many S gaugers use. Basically, these upgraded ground throws work as an SPDT and can be used to power a turnout frog, signalling system or a relay coil. 119R (rigid) \$3.95; 220S (sprung) \$4.25.

DEPOTS BY JOHN (P.O. Box 23011, Milwaukee, WI 53233). New to the S scene, Depots by John will be producing a small residential (20s to 40s) residential garage. The styrene kit features Grandt Line windows. It can also be used as a maintenance shed. \$18.95 each. Due to ship in January, 1997.

DES PLAINES HOBBIES (1468 Lee St., Des Plaines, IL 60018) has 36" finescale metal wheelsets coming. These will be similar to the 33" ones. Check with Des Plaines for availability and price.

DPM (Design Preservation Models, P.O. box 66, Linn Creek, MO 65052). More structure possibilities for S gaugers from DPM. The new plastic HO whitewater Brewing building for \$39.98 has a 6 x 9.5" footprint which should make a nice small S gauge industry just by doing the usual tricks of adding a foundation and enlarging some of the doors. A boxcar doorway could be converted to a truck door. DPM also has

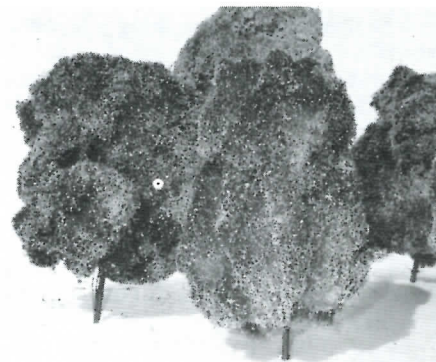
some bulk pack modular kits which are large HO buildings, but should work in S almost as is. #363 is a Victorian store and #364 is a 1920s apartment building.



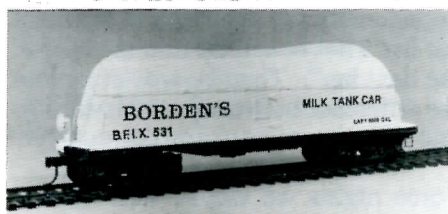
DPM Whitewater Brewing. It's HO

HOBBY SURPLUS SALES (287 Main St., P.O. Box 2170-SNE, New Britain, CT 06050) has a new Train Repair Catalog with 40 pages of American Flyer parts. Both Gilbert and repro parts are identified. Send \$4.00 for a copy.

LEE SCOTT SCENERY (P.O. Box 14, Simpsonville, MD 21150, PH: 410-730-1386) is a new scenery supplier. Lee is offering a 5-pack of custom made deciduous trees from 5 to 7" high for \$59 per pack including shipping within the U.S. Lee is a member of the Baltimore AF club and has given several clinics on constructing these trees. Trees are formed out of polyester batting over a natural tree trunk. The batting is sprayed green with undertones of brown which gives the appearance of added depth. Trunks are hand painted with a black/brown mixture.

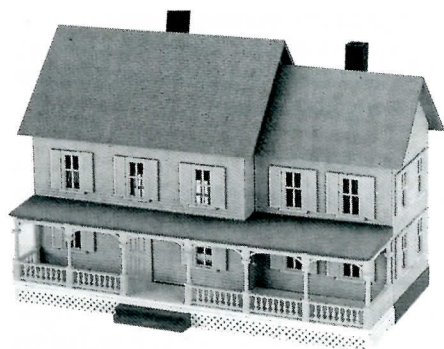


LEHIGH VALLEY MODELS (1225 N. Arch St., Allentown, PA 18104) has a Borden's bathtub milk tank car kit available. For now this car will be limited to 20 kits. The tank body is preformed resin cast (Hoquat Hobbies), and all parts are precut to size. Kit includes scale trucks, scale couplers and decals for \$37.00 plus \$3.00 priority mail.



LLEDO (avail. from Pastime Hobbies, 9311 Ogden Ave., Brookfield, IL 60513 or other diecast dealers). Lledo has some new trucks (mostly European types) in the Vanguard series which are 1/64. Probably around \$10 each.

MTH ELECTRIC TRAINS (Columbia, MD). A non-S manufacturer served up a surprise for S gaugers at the recent National Model & Hobby Show in Chicago. MTH is including three RTR styrene structures in its Spring 1997 O gauge catalog. The surprise is that the structures, 2 farmhouses and a church are really 85% of O scale - pretty close to S. The church is a little "hokey" looking, but the farmhouses would be a great addition to any layout. These will come RTR with interior lights for about \$25 each.



No. 2003 Country House appears to work perfectly in S

PBL (P.O. Box 769, Ukiah, CA 95482). The Sn3 injected D&RGW short caboose kit is now available for \$49.50. Included are decals, KD #26 couplers and sliding cupola windows. Also available soon will be a kit for the D&RGW Durango Depot. This is a

limited edition kit for \$199.50.

ROAD CHAMPS (local discount stores) has a new 1/64 cab over aerial fire truck lettered for the St. Louis Fire Department. About \$5.

S-HELPER SERVICE (2 Roberts Rd., New Brunswick, NJ 08901) has announced roadnames for the 2nd run stock cars and USRA wood boxcar. Stock: CN, CB&Q, MP, KATY, UP/OSL and UP red. Wood boxcars: Rutland, Clinchfield, Erie, Milwaukee Road, PRR MOW, Pac. Electric and Wabash.

Due in March 1997 are the re-built USRA boxcars (steel sides). Roadnames announced are: undec, C&O, C&NW, DL&W, Frisco, NYC (PMKY), PRR, ATSF Scout, ATSF Grand Canyon and Central Vermont. These will be RTR. \$5 deposit for reservations.

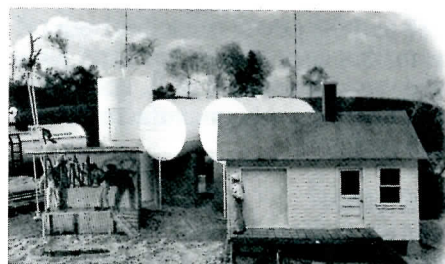
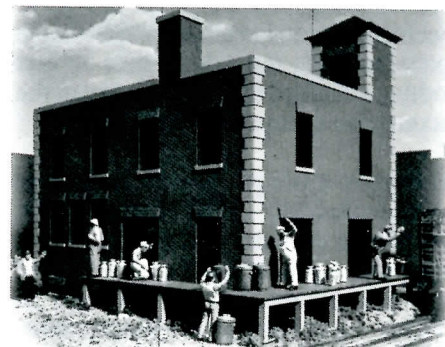
SOUTHWIND (P.O. Box 9293, Plant City, FL 33567). The new standard/narrow gauge logging cars will be imported soon. The brass cars will sell for \$149.50 each, but group discounts will be offered as well. Reservations being accepted now.

ANGELA TROTTA THOMAS (1107 East Longwood Dr., Clarks Summit, PA 18411. Ph: 717-586-0774). Our cover art is a new print by artist Angela Trotta Thomas. "Flyer Fantasy" prints are 13-1/2" x 18-1/2" and are signed and numbered. Unframed prints are \$75 each plus \$5 S&H. With standard wood frame, prints are \$210 plus \$15 S&H. A custom cherry wood framed print with triple mat is \$350 plus \$15 S&H. Pa. residents add 6% sales tax. Checks to the above name.

Last year's ('95) October issue of the *Dispatch* had a cover which used the print titled "The Circus Comes to Town." This print is still available at the same price structure as above.

WALTHERS (5619 W. Florist Ave., P.O. box 3039, Milwaukee, WI 53201). More surprises at the Chicago hobby show were some new plastic structures being offered in the Cornerstone Series. Two of these are undersized O gauge buildings which should work great in S with only minor modifications. One is the Brook Hill farm Dairy building which has a footprint of 9x11" and is 85/8" high - \$39.98. The other O gauge structure is the Phoenix Fuel Oil Co, a

bulk oil plant, for \$44.98. Look at the size of the O scale figures on the platforms of these buildings in the photos. Some new HO industrial buildings should also have S possibilities. A lumber industries series contains several large buildings such as a sawmill, planing mill and paper mill.



Walters new O scale industries should work well in S.

Ownership Change

SouthWind Models announces that Bill Wade has left the partnership with Jettie Padgett to pursue other S scale endeavors. With this change, the product line has been split to take advantage of each parties' specific interests.

Jettie will continue with SouthWind Models, and he is currently working on future projects. The existing model inventory is available directly or through your local dealer. Bill will add the former SouthWind line of brass detail parts to the growing line of BTS (Bill's Train Shop) products, and will be offering new parts in the future. BTS products are available directly or through your local dealer.

Best wishes go to both Jettie and Bill for future personal success, and for the continued growth of S scale.

SouthWind Models

P. O. Box 3175

Plant City, FL 33564-3175

REFLECTIONS ON ROBERT L. MILLER AND THE MILLER POWER TRUCK

By Demosthenes P. Gelopulos

How would you like to have diesel power trucks that ran smoothly, were free wheeling, and the motor and drive mechanism was contained entirely in the space between the side frames so that nothing extended up into the body of the locomotive except the bolster pin?

Well such a unique power truck was made exclusively in "S" scale from the late forties until the sixties. The most imaginative power truck ever designed was manufactured by the Robert L. Miller Laboratory in Valparaiso, Indiana. Bob Miller passed away in 1988 and the power truck has been off the market even longer, but I still have many vivid memories of it, and of the creative genius who manufactured and marketed it.

THE MAN

Before I discuss this marvelous invention, let me tell you something about its inventor. Bob Miller was a community leader and a wonderful person. He was elected to the city council for many terms. He ran a small high precision machine shop in Valparaiso which employed about 20 or 30 people.

Bob had two sons, who were about my age (I was born in 1938). His home and business were a gathering point for many teen aged boys. He would often interrupt whatever he was doing to show us his newest machine tool or to explain his current projects. Though not at all athletic himself, the basketball hoop in his parking lot was busy from the time school ended until dark. He took an interest in any boy who came around his shop.

He suggested my career to me when I was 14 years old while visiting during an operating session. He said "you are good with mathematics, and you like the electrical aspects of the layout, have you thought of being an electrical engineer?" I was such a naive 14 year old that I asked him what mathematics had to do with electrical engineering.

TEEN OPERATING SESSIONS:

During the nineteen fifties he had an operating session for boys every Sunday night. I now think it was about the only



Robert L. Miller

time he operated the layout. Occasionally his own sons participated, but often they did not. We would start after dinner and run until about 10 p.m. That was a lot less risky than it would be today, but I am sure that it must have given him some concerns. If so, he never showed any stress, and I don't believe he ever turned anyone away.

There was a situation comedy on television in the fifties called "Mr. Peepers", about a school teacher played by Wally Cox. All operation came to a halt for 30 minutes while we watched the show with him. If he drove to a model railroad show, he would take as many of us with him as would fit into his shiny black four-door Buick. One year, December 31 fell on a Sunday, and he had a New Years party for us.

Bob dispatched operations. He gave a yard crew (two boys) a set of index cards, one card for each freight car. All drop points were listed on the cards and a paper clip would mark specified drops. Pick-ups were similarly marked on index cards left near dropped freight cars. Road crews would take the made up trains out onto the continuous main line and circulate so many laps to get to the next town. At that town they would pick up or drop off designated freight cars from the one and only actual spur.

It is amazing how this simple scheme captivated several boys for hours. Bob would teach us railroad practice, point out if we did not wait long enough to charge the brake system on a train, and occasionally say "hey that B & O box car has a hot box, drop it in the spur at the next lap". Then he would explain the difference between journal bearings and roller bearings to any newcomers.

Some nights we would work on the layout a bit by cleaning track or "helping" him with a wiring problem or the construction of a kit. Sometimes we would talk about some aspect of railroading. One night several of us said we had never heard of a spring switch, so Bob hiked us to the Grand Trunk passing track near his building and we waited and talked for an hour until a West-bound freight ran through what looked like incorrectly positioned switch points.

Can you imagine someone with his responsibilities spending that much time with a group of adolescents. Of course, none of us imagined that he might have had more pressing matters to occupy his time. As we acquired responsibilities of our own, we began to realize how unselfish he was to share his time, his hobby, and his talent, explaining to us why his power truck would coast or how steam engines worked. I don't know where most of the other "boys" are today, but I know we are all much better for having known him.

THE LAYOUT

Bob's "S" scale layout was unbelievably simple. The main line was a simple loop of track which ran around a room about sixteen feet on a side. During the week, the room was used for some light assembly work in Bob's plant, including the assembly of the power trucks.

On Sunday, he removed a cover exposing a sixty car freight yard. There was a make-up track, a caboose track, and a ready track. Cross-overs at both ends of the yard connected it to the main line. On the opposite side of the room was a long passing track with the single industrial spur. A thirty inch long removable wooden bridge connected the main line across the one door into the

room. The rest of the railroad rested on two foot deep and three foot high wooden storage shelves painted with gray enamel. There was no scenery, though I vaguely recall a single structure, which I think was a depot. I suppose the dual purpose of the room made scenery impractical. It did not matter. I no longer remember whether our imagination filled in the missing scenery or whether the beautifully detailed trains themselves were such focal points that we did not notice the lack of background.

The track was made using a flexible plastic tie strip which Bob made and sold to model railroaders. Each eight or ten inch long section was keyed to hold the rail in gauge. It was easy to lay and held gauge perfectly, but once track was laid, it was hard to modify. There was a USRA light Mikado and a half dozen Alco S-1 locomotives, 50 or more beautiful freight cars, five or six orange wood cabooses, and a string of five open vestibule passenger cars. Each caboose and locomotive was lettered for the Grand Trunk, Bob's favorite road. Operation was mechanically flawless.

THE POWER TRUCK

The **Miller power truck** was the most novel model railroad drive mechanism to be produced in any scale. The standard model had sideframes and wheels sized for Alco four wheel S-1 power trucks. The motor and wheels were free wheeling and would coast as easily as an unpowered truck. A motor armature was wound around each wheel axle.

The wheels were cast in four separate segments which became the commutator segments of the motor with the rails then acting as the brushes. An ALNICO permanent magnet was supported between the two axles as shown the Figure. Thin magnetic pole pieces allowed the whole power truck to fit cleanly underneath the bolster.

You could purchase the power truck separately or as a part of an Alco S-1 switcher kit. the switcher was available undecorated or lettered for the Grand Trunk Western. The locomotive had a unique profile for a model diesel because you could see so much light between the truck and the body. The S-1 had a large lead weight which filled the engine compartment cavity, so the locomotive was very heavy and had great tractive effort. Traction fans loved the trucks

because they made it possible to have interior details in powered interurban cars.

PERFORMANCE

The locomotive ran like a dream. It would coast for great distances, and we would sometimes apply a small voltage in reverse to retard a coasting locomotive, thus creating a working dynamic braking scheme. Smooth starts were hard to get in the mid fifties because power supplies used selenium rectifiers (with high forward resistance) and rheostats to control speed. You could manually pulse the power to a Miller power truck by switching the power on and off to get smooth starts. When electrically pulsed (half wave rectified) power was introduced in the fifties, the Miller truck made even better slow starts, but you had to keep an eye on the motor temperature.

ENGINEERING

The truck was very well engineered. It had a lot of power. The motor had a very large number of turns of very fine wire, so it could operate on the low flux density of the Alnico magnets. I would love to see what Bob could do with some of the rare earth permanent magnets we have today, which have much higher intrinsic coercive forces and higher flux densities. The motor was more exposed to ventilation, but did not have the model frame as a heat sink. The high resistance armature limited stall current, but the fine wire could not handle as much current so you always used a circuit breaker or fuse on the track power.

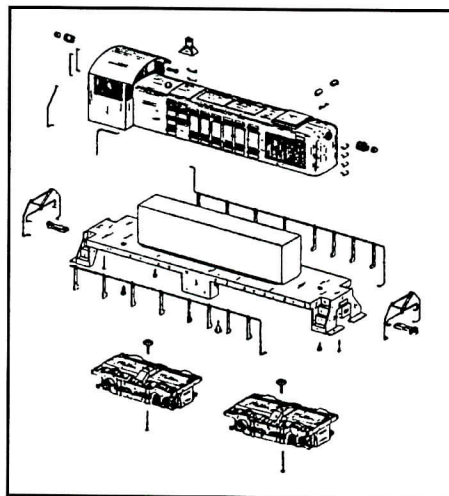
Bob had an endless string of ideas. He once fabricated several thin sheet metal coupler centering springs to illustrate how they could be installed so much more easily than the tiny coil springs used at the time. He sent them to a popular manufacturer who never acknowledged them, but came out with them the following year. They are still popular today.

He experimented with a radio controlled airplane receiver and servo to mechanically drive a potentiometer and provide bi-directional speed control by radio link to locomotives. Unfortunately, he could never quite fit both the vacuum tube receiver and servo into an "S" scale locomotive. If he had, he would have had reliable command control in 1956.

The power trucks were quite expensive

to buy, and to make. Bob said he subsidized his model railroad products out of profits from his other industrial projects.

His obvious philosophy was that it is not good enough just to take pleasure from a hobby; you must put something back into it as well. He felt that way about his community too. It is a pretty corny old fashioned notion, but I am sure glad that I knew him when I was a teenager. And wouldn't you love to see that power truck available again in your scale.



Exploded view of the Miller 1000 hp Alco S-1 diesel switcher kit. It originally sold for around \$56.00.

Robert L. Miller Timeline

1906 - Born Jan. 14 in Valparaiso, Indiana.

1924 - Graduated Valparaiso H.S. and entered Valparaiso Univ.

1925 - Attended Indiana Univ. and majored in physics.

1930 - Instructor at Valparaiso Tech.

1931 - Founded Robert L. Miller Laboratories, designers and fabricators of mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic and electronic equipment.

WWII era - helped 2 companies win E awards.

1947 - On Valparaiso School board. Received power truck and tie-strip patents.

1948-71 - Valparaiso City Council.

1978 - Sold business.

1988 - Died May 12 at age 82.

Miller



3/16" SCALE
MODEL RAILROAD
EQUIPMENT

STOCK LIST FEBRUARY 1, 1952

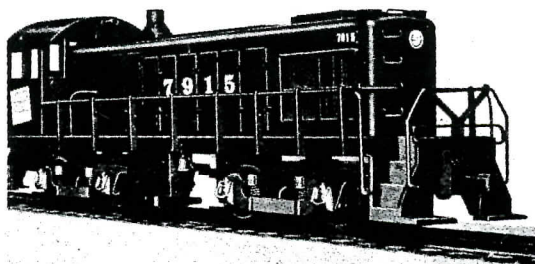
LOCOMOTIVE KITS

MILLER POWER TRUCKS AND DIESEL SWITCHER KITS

SCALE	TINPLATE		
S-12	ST-12	MILLER Twin motor power truck.....	\$21.25
S-11	ST-11	MILLER Single motor power truck.....	\$12.50
S-10	ST-10	MILLER Non-powered truck.....	\$ 3.75
S-1	ST-1	MILLER Motor unit only.....	\$10.00

Available with Enhorning F-7 truck frames at same prices.

S-1000	ST-1000	MILLER Switcher Kit, less trucks.....	\$13.50
S-1011	ST-1011	MILLER Switcher Kit, 1 non-powered and 1 single motor truck.....	\$29.75
S-1012	ST-1012	MILLER Switcher Kit, 1 non-powered and 1 twin motor truck.....	\$38.50
S-1212	ST-1212	MILLER Switcher Kit, 2 twin motor power trucks.....	\$56.00



MILLER DIESEL SWITCHER

MILLER Coupler-Adapters--for MILLER Switchers and other locos to work with A.F. automatic couplers, pr....\$1.00

ENHORNING F-7 Diesel Road Locomotives

Detailed plastic molded superstructure. Zamak cast truck frames. Available with MILLER motors or with wound field, geared motors.

With 2 MILLER motors and 2 Non-Powered axles.	A unit.....	\$37.50	B unit.....	\$35.00
With wound field geared motor.	A unit.....	\$26.00	B unit.....	\$24.00
Non-powered trailer units.	A unit.....	\$13.50	B unit.....	\$11.50
Body only, without trucks.	A unit.....	\$ 8.50	B unit.....	\$ 6.50

REX DOCKSIDE O-4-0 saddle tank switcher kit

From B & O prototype. All metal construction. Detailed Zamak castings and accurate stampings. Pittman DC-71 motor. Assembly is easy with complete instructions accompanying kit. Operates on sharp radius curves. Available for scale only. Tinplate is to be offered later. Attractively packaged. Dockside kit, complete with motor.....\$36.00



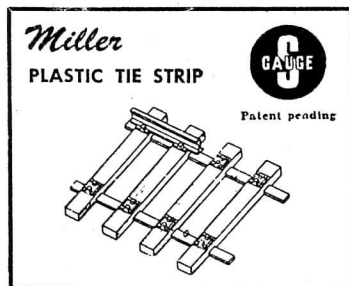
STINSON (Nord) Mikado 2-8-2 locomotive kit. All metal, with motor and tender.	Scale only.....	\$57.00
STINSON Consolidation 2-8-0 locomotive kit. All metal, with motor and tender.	Scale only.....	\$54.00

NIMCO Conversion kits for converting American Flyer S Gauge locomotives to operate on scale track:

For Locomotive No. 301-302, \$12.40; 312, \$14.40; 322, \$14.40; 342, \$12.40.

NIMCO Reversing rectifiers, for polarity control of direction of A.C. motors when operated on D.C. Replaces sequence reverse mechanism. E-1 Rectifier, bracket and instructions.....\$2.80. E-2 Rectifier only.....\$2.40

Note: Due to material shortages and other factors interfering with production schedules, it is not always possible to make immediate shipment of locomotives listed above. We attempt to maintain a stock of these items, to give the best possible service. If prompt shipment is not possible, order will be acknowledged and approximate shipping date given.



MILLER Tie Strip with No. 126 S gauge scale rail makes the most realistic track offered to the railroad fan. It works equally well with either scale or tinplate (toy train) equipment. Flexible--bends to any curve without cutting. Assembles easily, by sliding rail endwise under spike heads. Spikes and tie-plates on every tie. Must be seen to be appreciated.

Six inch sample, less rail 15¢. Package of 10 feet, less rail.....\$2.25 (S gauge brass rail is not available at this time. If you can obtain H0 rail, it will fit the tie strip and work with scale trains. Not suitable for tinplate.) Brass Rail Joiners for #126 rail.....25¢ doz. Insulated Rail Joiners.....35¢ doz. Switch Ties to match MILLER Tie Strip. #6, 13" long, right or left hand...75¢ ea. MILLER Turnouts-----Not available at this time.

STREAMLINE PASSENGER CAR KITS

CHESTER INDUSTRIAL ARTS CO. -- Streamliner body kits. Aluminum, with wood roof and floor. High quality, but inexpensive. Choice of 85' "standards" for scale, or 60' "shorts" for sharp curves or tinplate. Kits do not include trucks or couplers.

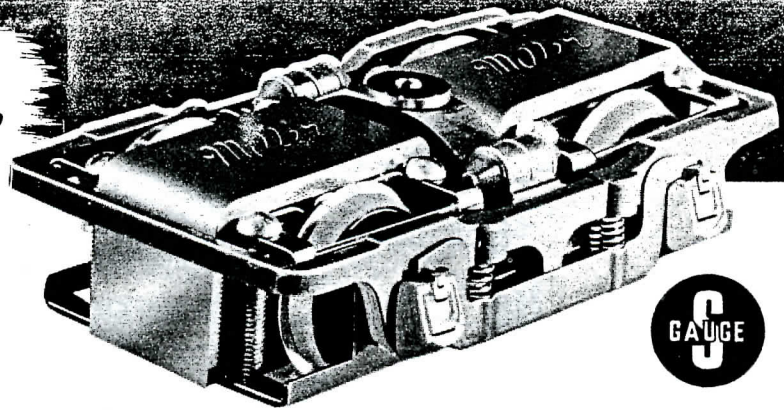
(1) Baggage-Dormitory-Chair; (2) Chair Car; (3) Dining Car; (4) Roomette-Sleeper; (5) Mail Car;	
(6) Observation-Lounge-Tavern; (7) Mail-Baggage; (8) Express-Baggage.	
All 60' cars except Observation...\$2.45	All 85' cars except Observation...\$2.95
60' Observation-Lounge-Tavern...\$2.95	85' Observation-Lounge-Tavern...\$3.45

10
SYLVANIA MODELS Streamline Passenger car kits. --- See special list enclosed herewith.

Miller POWER TRUCKS

DIRECT DRIVE

COMPLETELY ASSEMBLED, FULLY SPRUNG



S
GAUGE

MOUNT ENTIRELY BELOW THE FLOOR

1. MOTOR

Direct drive, hi-torque slow speed permanent magnet type. Twelve volt D. C., two rail operation only. No brushes to wear. Commutation is accomplished through the segmented wheels. Normal slippage keeps them clean. The five pole precision ground rotor is wound with heavy "Formvar" wire giving high heat protection.

4. MOUNTING

The motors, mounted on the axle, do not extend above the bolster level. The MILLER Truck, when mounted under your locomotive, is ready to roll. There is no wiring to worry about, and as the truck is free to swivel, no difficulty is experienced on short radius curves.

2. FULLY EQUALIZED

The truck is constructed so that it has a fully sprung suspension. The equalizers and springs are fully operative. Freely floating journal boxes move in ways in the frame exactly like the prototype. This construction permits the truck to operate with a minimum of Derailments, even if your track is rough.

5. MOTOR UNIT

The motor unit is completely self-contained. It can be removed easily without tools and all units are interchangeable. If you want more power simply replace one of the non-powered axles with a Motor Unit, and you're ready to go in a matter of minutes.

3. BEARINGS

The journal bearings are of a special bearing alloy. They require only occasional oiling and will give lifelong trouble free service.

6. ONE PIECE FRAME

As in the prototype the frame is entirely functional. It is the backbone of the truck—it carries the journal box ways, the equalizers, and the springs. No dummy side frames that lack detail—one of the many reasons for the superiority of MILLER Trucks.

TINPLATE SCALE

ST-12

S-12 TWIN MOTOR POWER TRUCK.....\$21.25

Two motors for full power. Ample power for average road service and switching. (For maximum tractive effort use two S-12's).

ST-11

S-11 SINGLE MOTOR POWER TRUCK.....\$12.50

Ample power to handle short trains and light switching duty. Second Motor may be added later.

ST-10

S-10 NON-POWERED TRAILER TRUCK.....\$3.75

Matches power truck—fully sprung and equalized—wheel and axle assembly may be replaced by Motor Units later.

ST-1

S-1 MOTOR UNIT\$10.00

Complete motor assembly, with wheels and journal boxes, ready to slip into your S-10 or S-11 truck frame.

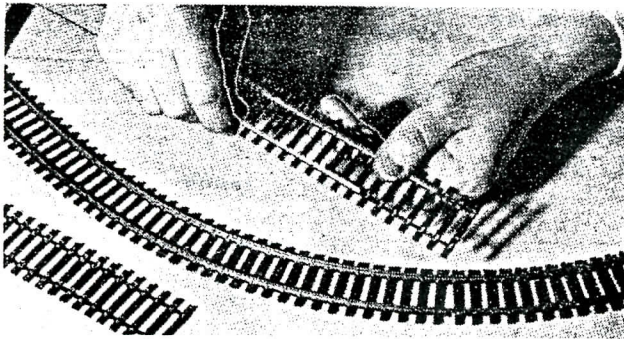
Miller



PLASTIC

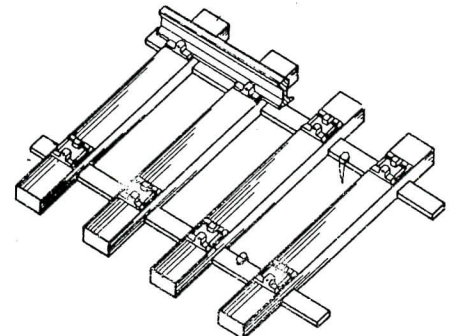
Patent pending

TIE STRIP



- FOR SCALE OR TINPLATE
- ASSEMBLES EASILY
- BENDS TO ANY CURVE
- DETAILED FOR REALISM
- QUIET--CUSHIONS TRACK

MILLER Plastic Tie Strip assembles easily with N.M.R.A. No. 126 S gauge scale rail (.125" high) to make the most realistic scale track you have ever seen. The material comes in six inch strips, and has tie plates and four spikes on each tie. It is assembled by sliding rails endwise underneath the spikes, which hold them firmly in perfect gauge. The assembled track is flexible and may be formed to a smooth curve of any desired radius without cutting. It is easily fastened to roadbed by cementing, or better, by placing spikes on web underneath the rail, as shown, at intervals of two to four inches.



Miller PLASTIC TIE STRIP

Package of 10 ft.
less rail! \$2.25

THE ROBERT L. MILLER LABORATORY 900 N. WASHINGTON ST. VALPARAISO, INDIANA. 11



You really don't need an excuse to come to Colorado, however in 1997 you have a good one! For the first time the **N.A.S.G. National Convention** will be held in Denver, Colorado. New tours, new clinics, new layouts, and if that's not enough reason, then there is Colorado with its natural beauty and man-made attractions. Mountains, lakes, forests, riding, rafting, hiking - Colorado has too many things to list and plenty of things to do for everyone. If you would like to get away for a few days, or if you would like to take the family along for a vacation, come to the Convention and come to Colorado for the summer of 1997. For more information about a Colorado vacation, contact the convention committee or the following for help:

**Colorado-Denver
Visitors Information Bureau**
1555 California St.,
Denver, CO 80202
(303) 892-1505

Family Attractions

The following is only a partial list of attractions of interest to family members.

Rocky Mountain National Park- The Denver Mint- The United States Air Force Academy- Denver Zoo, Art and Natural History Museums- Colorado History Museum- Adolph Coors Brewery tours- Elitch Gardens Amusement Park- Water World- and more! Denver and Colorado offer many other attractions that you can visit. Gray Line Tours offers tours of Denver, Denver's Mountain Parks, Rocky Mountain National Park, and other tours can be arranged. We will have more information available on tours at the convention. If you would like something special, drop us a note and

we will do our best to get you information or you may contact Gray Line of Denver, 5855 E. 56th Ave. Denver, CO 80022 (303) 289-2841.

The historic mining towns of Central City and Blackhawk, 30 miles west of Denver, have low stakes gambling. Shuttle bus trips to these towns can be arranged—we will have more information at the convention.

Hotel and Area

The convention hotel is the **Northglenn Holiday Inn** located at 10 East 120th Avenue (I-25 and 120th Avenue) on the north edge of metro Denver.

The location is adjacent to a City of Northglenn park and recreation center. The area features many restaurants and is near a Regional Transportation District park & ride location. For the convention, the hotel room rate is \$67.00 for up to four people. To receive this rate you must contact the hotel directly at 303/457-1741. This rate is good for up to one month before the convention (June 9).

A "Good Sam" **campground**, Denver North Campground, 16700 North Washington, Broomfield, Co 80020 (303) 452-4120 is located approximately 10 minutes north of the convention hotel. You may also call 1-800-851-6521 for more information and reservations.

Transportation

Denver is served by several major airlines: United, TWA, American, etc. and three Amtrak trains: East and West by the California Zephyr, the Northwest by the Pioneer, and the Southwest by the Desert Wind. While in Denver if you would like a rental car, please contact the hotel for a special rate on a

Enterprise Rent-A-Car.

Basic Convention Fare

The basic registration fee (\$45.00) includes all hotel activities, clinics, and dealer displays plus admission to the Colorado Railroad Museum. A family registration (\$65.00) includes all activities and the railroad museum admission for a family (children to 18 years old).

Banquet

The banquet will be an informal Western Roundup dinner served family style. The dinner will include barbecued beef, fried chicken, potatoes, baked beans, corn on the cob, coleslaw, biscuits, strawberry shortcake and drinks for \$28.00 per person. The awards ceremony and entertainment will follow the dinner.

Prototype Railroading

Colorado and the Denver area have something in prototype railroading to suit any interest. If you come to Colorado before the start of the convention, make plans to ride the **Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge** or the **Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railway**. Each will give you a ride behind narrow gauge steam to remember for a lifetime.

Other tourist railroads you can ride are the Leadville, Colorado & Southern, from Leadville up Fremont Pass or the Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge, a 2-foot narrow gauge steam railroad at the historic gold mining town of Cripple Creek or the Tiny Town Railroad, a small-size railroad pulling full size people through a quaint little town.

If your interests are abandoned roadbeds and ghost railroads, then you can follow the Rio Grande over Marshall Pass or the South Park to the East or West portals of Alpine tunnel. Or maybe places like Idaho Springs, Como, Fairplay or Bories Pass on the old Colorado & Southern would be of interest to you? Following these abandoned railways will get you into the mountains and is a great way to see Colorado.

If you prefer modern prototype, head up to the Union Pacific at Cheyenne or Sherman Hill to see one of the busiest main lines in America. For mountain railroading, you can visit Tennessee Pass or Moffat tunnel to see how modern railroads battle mountain grades. You can also follow the Joint Line south out of Denver to watch the BNSF handle

DENVER ZEPHYR '97

heavy coal traffic. If you do not want to leave town, Denver has Burlington Northern and Union Pacific(including ex-Southern Pacific and Rio Grande) yards, intermodal facilities, and shops.

Convention Car

The convention car will be a special run of Pacific Rail Shops 50ft. double door boxcar. The car will be painted in Rio Grande's zephyr scheme of gold over silver separated by a black stripe and with black ends. The cars will be available in two numbers 63797 and 63765 with either scale or high rail trucks. Cars are \$34.95 each with \$3.50 shipping.

Tours

* Colorado Railroad Museum -

Located in Golden, the finest collection of Colorado narrow gauge equipment you can find. Also a nice collection of regional standard gauge equipment. There is a museum building with displays of paper and other artifacts from all of Colorado's railroads. You will have about one-and-a-half hours here on the Wednesday tour or about two-and-a-half hours on the Friday tour.

* **JAKS Industries** - JAKS Industries makes freight car and building kits in HO, S and O scale plus scenery materials.

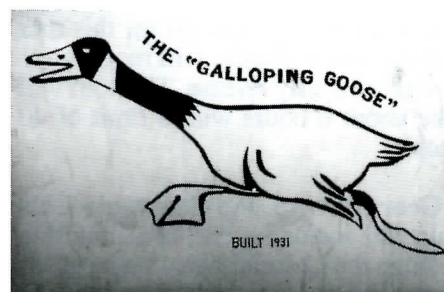
* **Forney Museum** - Located four blocks West of downtown Denver and adjacent to Confluence Park (the birth place of Denver), the museum is in an old streetcar power house building. The museum displays over 100 antique and classic cars, three locomotives (including a Big Boy) plus bicycles, motorcycles and more railroad equipment. Museum admission is \$4.00.

* **Platte Valley Trolley** - The trolley provides an approximately 20 minute ride along the Platte River from 15th St. adjacent to Forney Museum to Decatur St. and return. Trolley ride is \$2.00

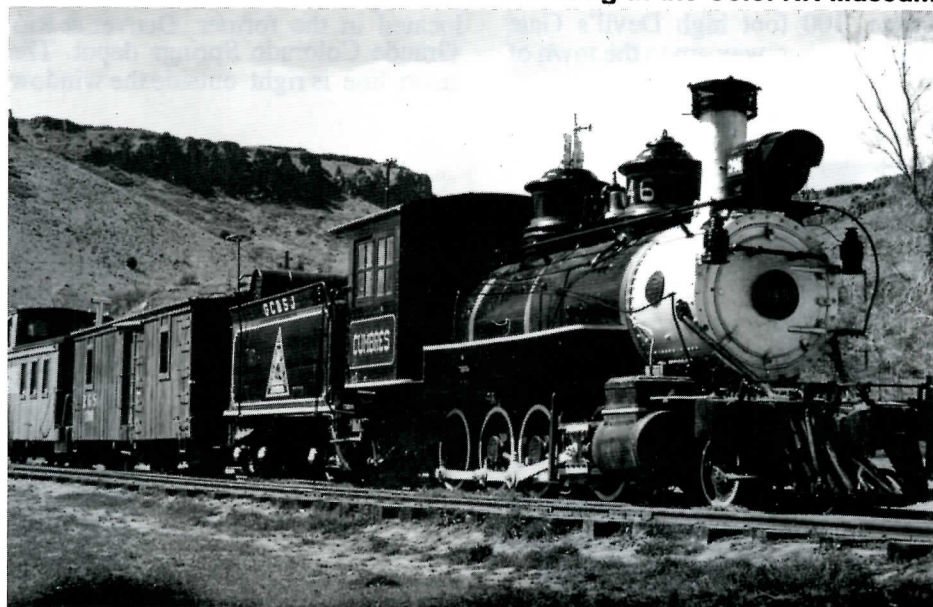
* **UP facilities**, Cheyenne, Wyoming - Visit Union Pacific's Cheyenne roundhouse shops and yard, home of UP's preservation program. This is where Union Pacific restores and services the locomotives in their heritage fleet, such as UP 4-6-6-4 Challenger No.



The Northglenn Holiday Inn is just north of Denver.

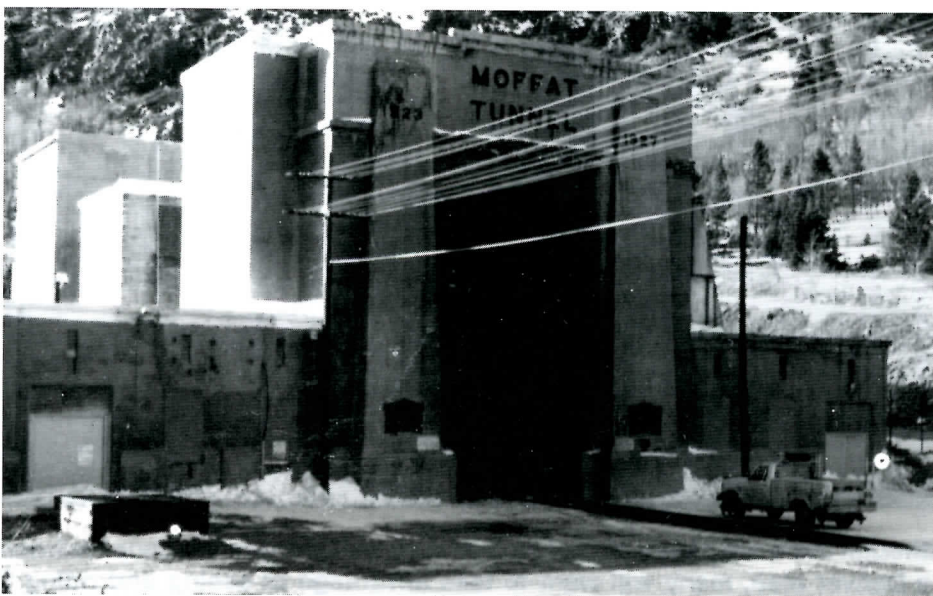


RGS Galloping Goose logo on the real thing at the Colo. RR Museum.



The Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden (just west of Denver) has a terrific collection of narrow gauge equipment. Take the tour or on your own.

Photo by Glenn Sponholtz



Shown here is the east portal of the famous Moffat Tunnel where you can still see standard gauge trains on the former Rio Grande line.

DENVER ZEPHYR '97

3985 and UP 4-8-4 Northern No. 844. You must be 21 years old for this tour and the Union Pacific will require you to sign a liability release. This tour will take about 6 hours with a limit of 40 people.

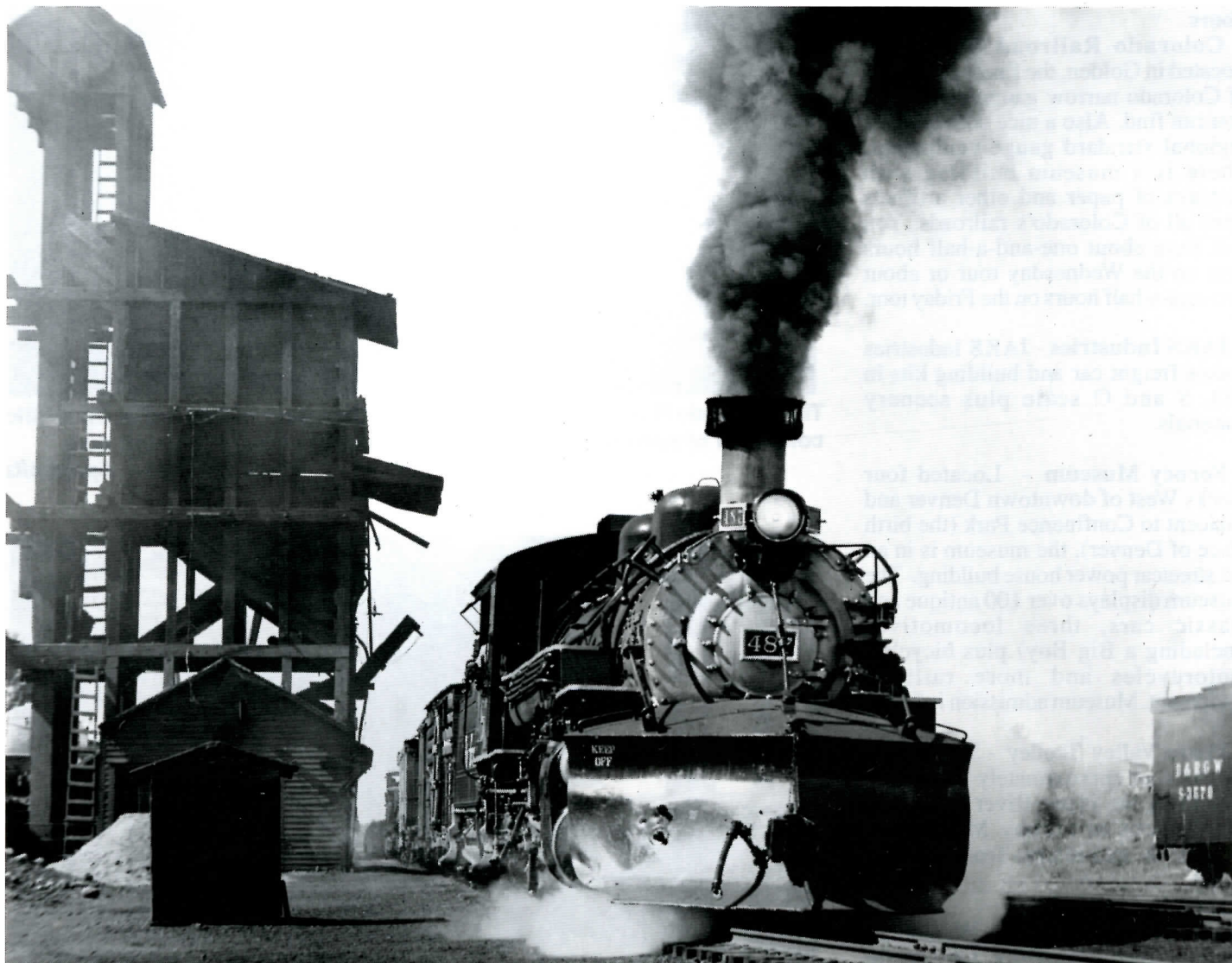
*** Georgetown Loop Railroad** - This tour will include a one hour bus ride through the Colorado mountains to the historic mining town of Georgetown. At Georgetown you will board a narrow gauge steam train for a ride over the historic 100 foot high Devil's Gate bridge on your way up to the town of

Silverplume. On the return trip you will stop for a tour of the Lebanon Silver Mine. This tour will take about 6 hours.

*** Colorado Springs** - This tour will start with ride south from Denver, with many fine views of the Colorado's Front Range mountains, to Colorado Springs and the Western Museum of Mining and Industry. The Museum features displays of historic mining equipment and methods. Lunch will be at Giuseppes' Depot restaurant which is located in the former Denver & Rio Grande Colorado Springs depot. The main line is right outside the window

and you may see a train or two. Then the tour proceeds to Manitou Springs to ride the world's highest cog railway to the top of America's best-known mountain—14,110 foot Pikes Peak. The tour will take about 10 hours with a limit of 40 people.

A word of caution: Silverplume is 10,000 feet above sea level and Pikes Peak is over 14,000 feet. If you have any physical problem that may cause you difficulty at these altitudes, please consult your doctor before taking these tours.



Although there are plenty of prototype trains, the Georgetown Loop Railroad and several railroad museums around the Denver area, many will want to take advantage of seeing and riding the spectacular tourist railroads in the southwest corner of Colorado. This is a 1977 photo of a "freight" photographers' special on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR in Chama. Reserve ahead if you plan to ride either this line or the Durango & Silverton. *Jeff Madden*

48-Foot Rib-Side Containers

A Simple Kitbashing Project

By Mike Sulzbach

This is one project that really did take longer to photograph and write than it did to actually build.

Having just finished my first Des Plaines' Husky Stack and pair of containers to fit, I ran across an article in the February 1996 issue of *Model Railroading* which immediately caught my eye. The article was a photo story of the 48' rib-side containers now being manufactured by the prototype. After studying the photos carefully, I determined that a good copy could be reproduced in S gauge by simply adding ribs to the Des Plaines' 48' smooth side container (like the ones I just completed). Even the existing rivet patterns matched, so I didn't do anything extra to the container except build them as the starting point.

Now, to convert them to rib-sides I used Evergreen S scale 2" x 3" strips for the new ribs. I cut them all to a length of 8' 2" using a Chopper. There are 46 ribs in all, 21 for each side and 4 for the front. The prototype has 5 ribs on the front panel, but the model has rivet patterns for only 4, so that's what I went by. The front ribs are also slightly shorter than the side ribs. It was easier to trim the front ribs individually as they were applied, rather than set up the Chopper for only 4 cuts.

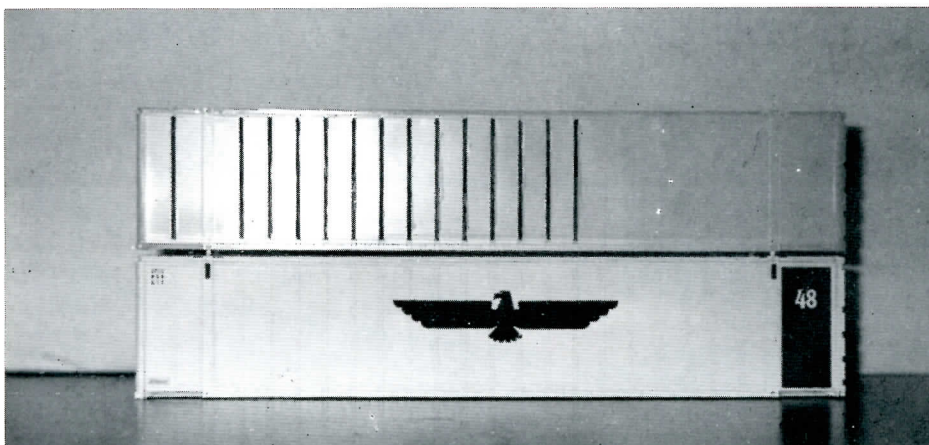
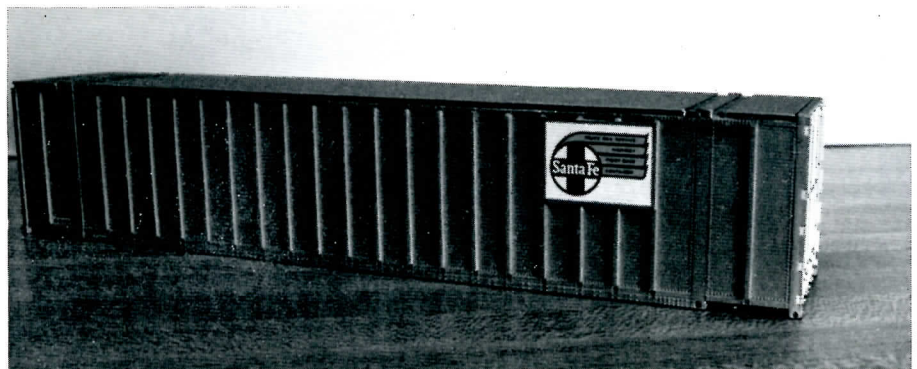
To attach the ribs to the container, simply

set one rib in between the rivet lines. The rib will practically center itself. Now, touch the top and bottom with Testor's liquid cement. Continue on each side until all the ribs are in place. Once all the ribs are attached, I went back and added more liquid cement along the length of each rib to make sure they were well attached to the body. Allow these to dry, then the container is ready for painting and lettering.

The photo story in *Model Railroading* shows a variety of containers, including APL smooth side and rib-side, both of which match Des Plaines' decals. Note that the heralds on the APL ribbed container are cut to fit between each rib. A matching red stripe is on the outer flat surface of each rib, resulting in a broken herald if viewed from an angle. Also shown were several ATSF containers. This is what I chose to build. The Santa Fe uses a blue and white circular herald.

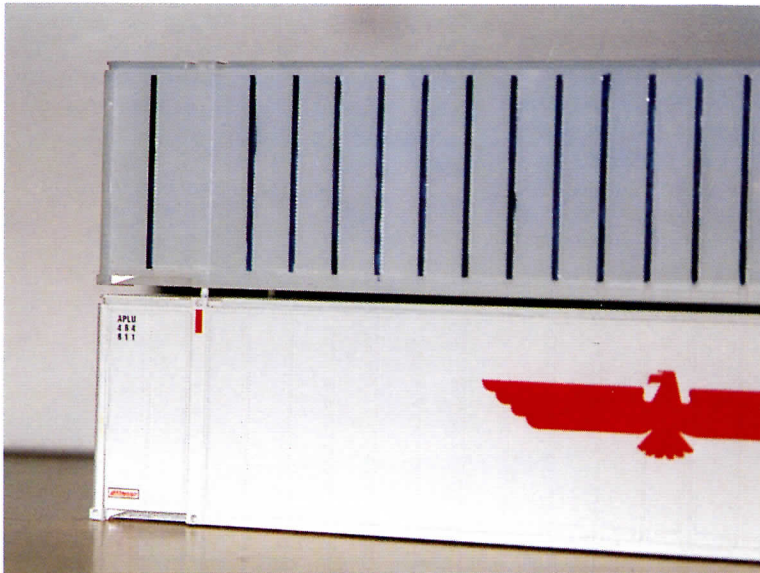
I had a set of Herald King HO ATSF piggyback decals that I used (set #Z-30). These have yellow "wings" on the heralds stating different modes of ATSF transportation. Since one line said "container", I free-lanced a little and used the entire decal. You could cut out the herald and be more accurate, but I liked the splash of extra color. For the heralds to be flat, I cut plates of .010" styrene for each side and glued them on. Also make a plate for the front herald. I forgot about this one until the container was painted and half lettered, so I put the front herald on the back door.

Painting is easy — I simply sprayed the whole container with Testor's silver from a spray can. When dry, apply the decals right over the silver. I didn't use gloss coat since the silver dries smooth. Use Solvaset over the decals, then when dry, spray a light coating of Testor's Dullcote over the entire container. This gives the silver a nice, dull aluminum color. That's it! Very easy! Now you too can add a little variety to your container cars.



Above - is a completed container with 21 ribs added to the long side. The side decals are placed on a flat plate of .010" styrene to simplify construction. Left - the top container, partially completed, shows the Evergreen ribs being added to the plain-side container as it comes from Des Plaines. Bottom container is complete and painted.
Photos by Mike Sulzbach

The top 48' rib-side container was easily converted from a smooth side one available from Des Plaines Hobbies.



There are 21 ribs on each side plus 4 for the front. The prototype has 5 on the front, but Mike used 4 so he could cover the 4 rivet lines. Evergreen 2"x3" strips were used for the ribs.

Mike used a Herald King HO Santa Fe decal (set Z-30) for the side emblems. He made a plate of .010" styrene for the decal so it would lay flat. It is convenient to use a plate for the front decal also.



Season's Greetings

How many of us remember being the awe struck youngster in a scene like this during the Christmas season? This lucky youngster is Bill Lane, Jr., in 1968.



S-PIKES



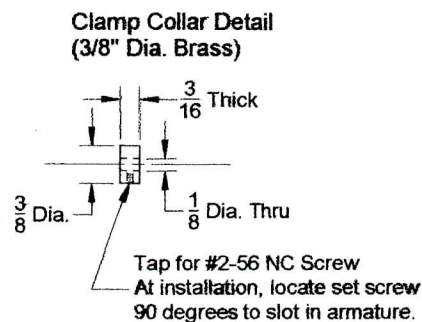
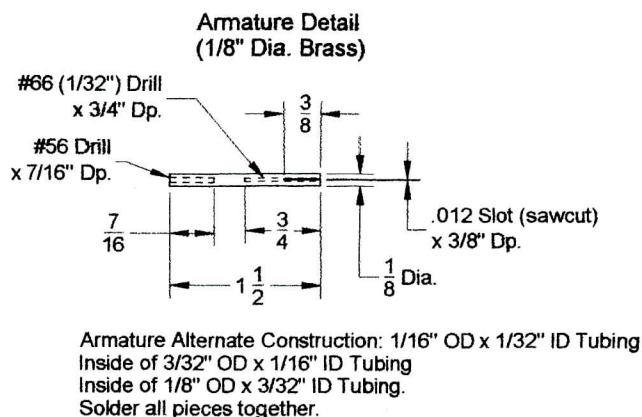
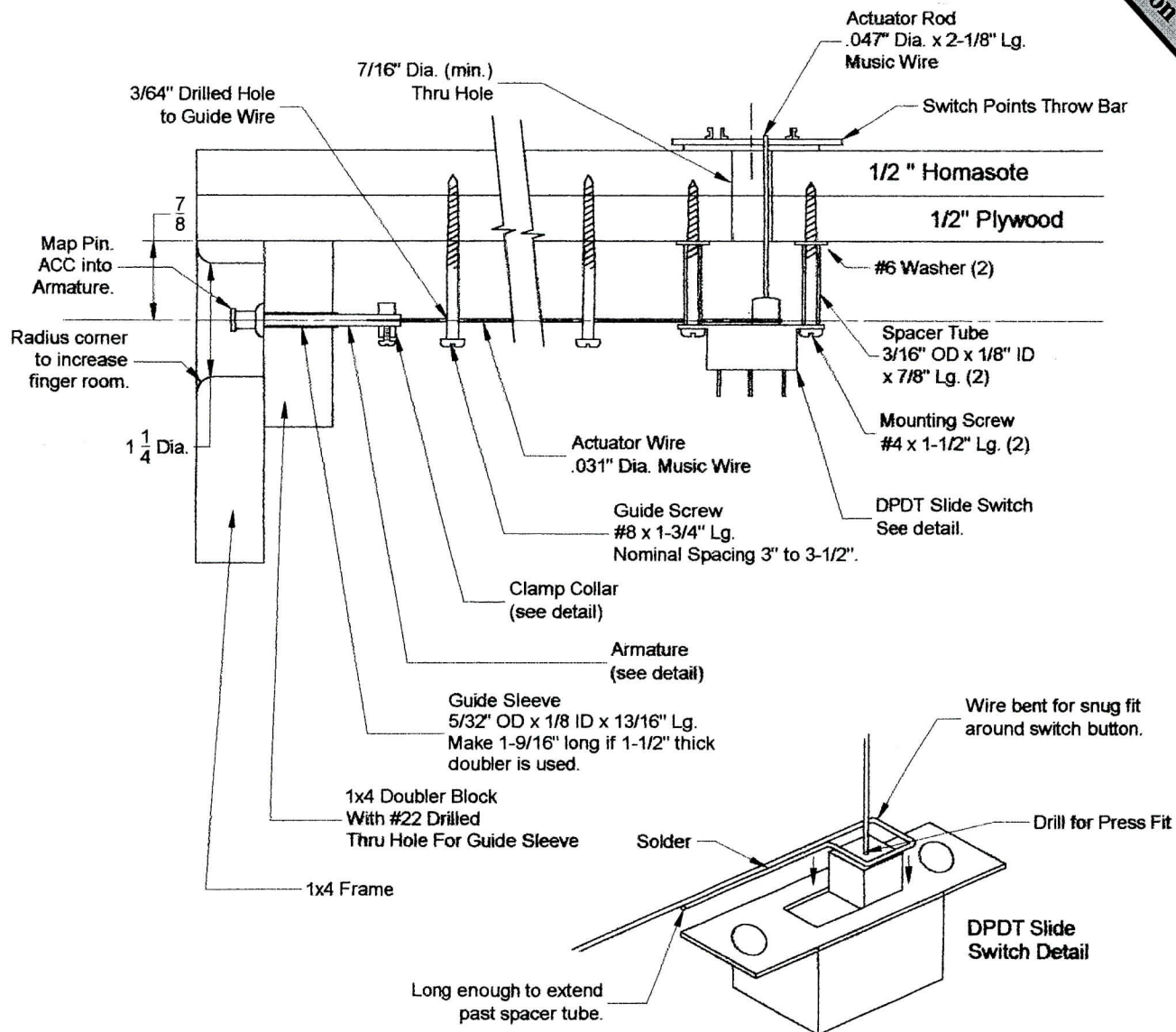
Charles Bettinger of Vernon, Ct. created this wintry scene on his Charleston & Pattville Railroad. Note that he disguised a gas meter inside this industry.

Photo by Dave Pool.



Turnout Actuating Mechanism for HOUSTON S Gaugers Modular Layout

J. Troxell 6-5-89



An S Gauge Track Plan The EASTPORT & HIGHLAND

By Jeff Madden

PLANNING:

If I were building an S gauge layout in a 12' x 13'6" room, I just naturally wouldn't expect to build an empire. I would want as decent a radii as I could get; I would want plenty of switching possibilities; I would prefer a point-to-point design with a continuous running option; I would expect to have some highly detailed scenes. I would also want a simple track plan using mostly ready-made products. This layout would work for either S standard or Sn3.

Sounds like a tall order, but with careful design most of these goals can be reasonably met.

The Eastport & Highland is a free-lance shortline design which would enable the builder to be flexible as to motive power and rolling stock. If any specific prototypes are desired, they could be worked in as leased or interchange equipment. If not, then any choice of equipment and paint scheme could be the owner's own personal choice.

OPERATION:

the E&H is primarily a point-to-point branch line running from Eastport to Highland as shown in the schematic diagram (Fig. 2). The connecting loop with its holding siding would be used for continuous running or for interchange trackage during realistic operation.

Mainline operation is out of the question for a layout of this size, therefore, the builder should mentally prepare himself to accept short trains, medium to small motive power and a limited number of townsites.

Steam or first generation diesels would probably work better on a layout this size since the standard 40' freight car would look better and operate better.

With these limitations and goals in mind, let's follow the E&H from end to end. The staging yard at Eastport would simply be that - a place to stage trains or receive them. Typically, prior to an operating session, 2 tracks could be staged with outbound trains and the remaining empty track could be held open for an incoming train. The far track could hold a local freight. The

middle track could be left open. The near track could hold a short mixed train or a doodlebug. A suggestion would be to build staging shelves below the staging yard to store rolling stock off-line and double as display shelves.

A train coming out of the hidden staging yard would be a westbound. It would appear at Pine Jct. and take the 60 degree crossing, go into a tunnel and loop back to the crossing through Valley Crossing. This would be the mid-point townsite on the layout where lots of switching could occur.

A train could then run continuous laps if desired before ascending the grade at the back of the layout. After crossing a long viaduct and a timber trestle, the final destination at Highland would be reached.

Here a typical dead-end prairie town, there would be more switching and turning of locomotives, if necessary. The shelf-interchange mentioned above could again be utilized for cars going off-line.

CONSTRUCTION:

Framework would be open-grid with the exception of the Eastport staging yard which could just be a bookshelf with track on it.

Layout height is important. It should be fairly high - say 45 to 48" - for several reasons. One is to be able to easily crawl underneath for wiring and access. Another is to be able to locate a workbench and storage shelves beneath parts of the layout. As designed, all scenicked trackage is within easy reach.

Assuming the layout location is in an interior room of a home, in order to do the least physical damage to the layout room itself, only a minimum number of screws should be used to anchor the layout to the walls. The backdrops along the walls should be of a thin material and, preferably, attached the benchwork and not the walls. The backdrop need only be about 2 to 2-1/2 feet above the layout track base.

Note that the backdrop down the middle of the main layout section divides a scenicked and an unscenicked section.

The section to the left could be scenicked if the layout were freestanding without walls on the left and bottom. Again, assuming a wall is in place to the left, the backdrop would help hide the looping track effect. A strategically placed mirror in the upper corner of the unfinished area can be used to locate trains in this area - that is if the backdrop isn't too high.

The door to the room should be a sliding one, or it should open outward. Or just don't have a door in the first place, unless you need protection from cats or kids.

CONTROL:

Control could be just a simple 2-cab control block system since only 2 trains at a time would be practical. The only complicated wiring would be the reverse loop between Pine Jct. and Valley Crossing. A sound system would seem very practical on such a small layout.

TRACKAGE:

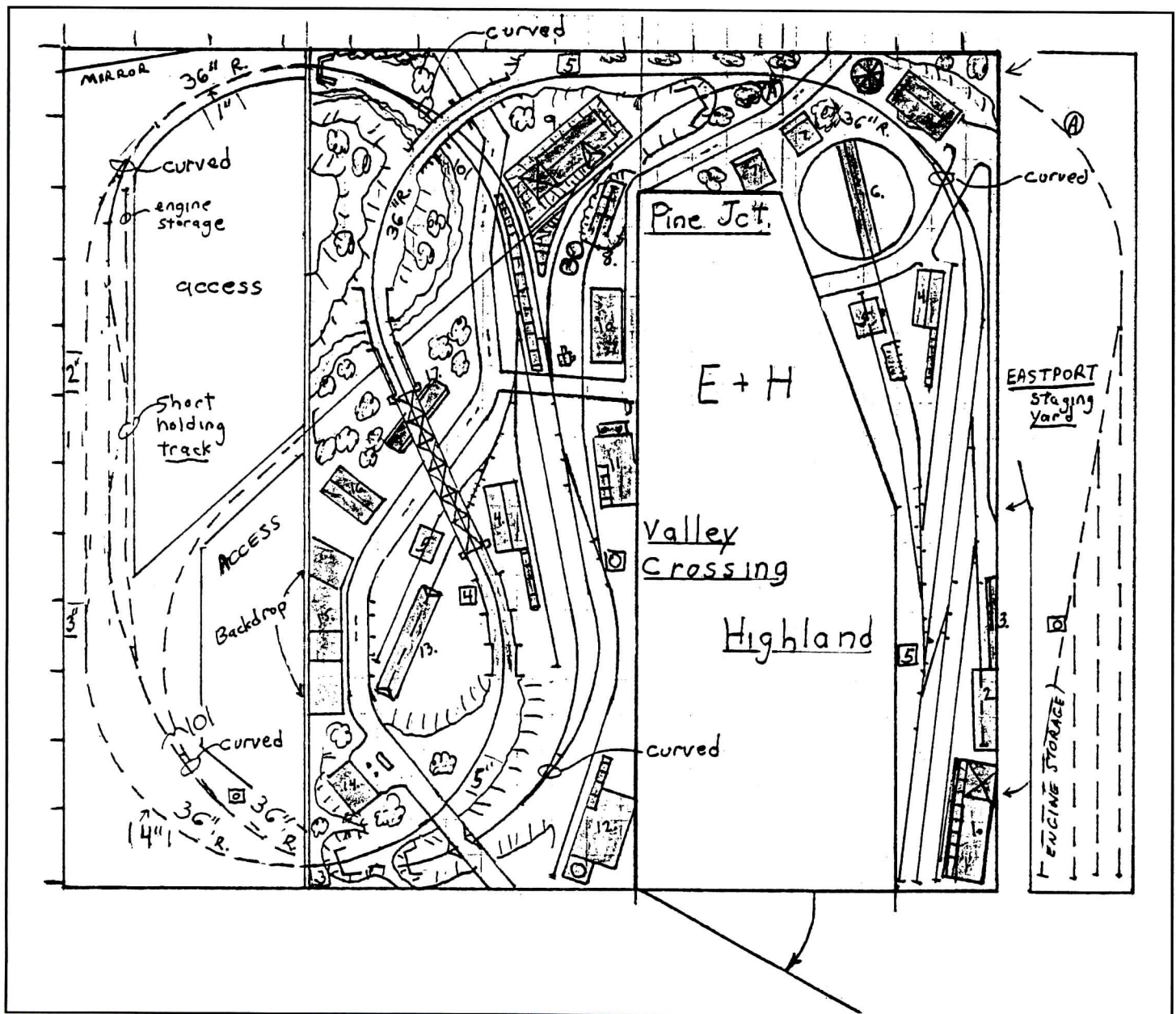
The layout is designed for 36" radius - about maximum in this tight space unless tracks were just looped around the room with a lift bridge. But here we have no duck, no lift. Any S gauge track would work - American Models Code 148, Code 100. If you were to handlay track - I would do it only for exposed track. Note that there are 5 curved turnouts used. These are a real help in allowing the widest curves possible and longer sidings, but these will have to be custom made. By using American Models 27" radius snap track, maybe some curved switches could be eliminated.

SCENERY:

Basically, the visible portion of the E&H depicts two separate towns which would more or less be constructed as two modules scenically divided by the aisle. Each townsite would be made up of two 6 foot modules end-to-end. The Valley Crossing /Pine Jct. area would be the scenic highlight focusing on the intricate junction and the station. The high-line would add interest and give the excuse for some bridges.

The Highland area cannot have all the scenic interest that the Valley Crossing area can due to the narrow area to scenic, but careful treatment of backdrops or building flats can make this area interesting as well.

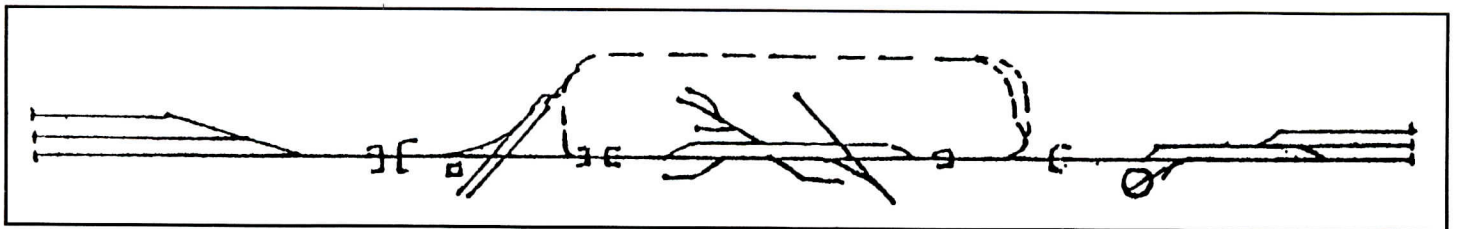
For a layout this size, quaint is the word.



The Eastport & Highland - a 12' x 13' 6" layout in S gauge. Fig. 1

Structure Key

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Foundry | 7. House | 13. Enginehouse |
| 2. Bottle cap factory | 8. Coal trestle | 14. Gas station |
| 3. Cold storage | 9. Comb. station | 15. Block of stores |
| 4. Freighthouse | 10. Lumber yard | 16. Church |
| 5. Coal and fuel oil | 11. Co-op feed mill | 17. Diner |
| 6. 21" turntable | 12. Woolen mill | |



Meet an S gauger

Dan Jansky, Age 6

by Joseph Jansky

The Cuyahoga Valley S Gauge Association would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our Junior Engineer, Dan Jansky.

Dan is six years old and the third son of club Secretary Joseph Jansky, your author. Dan has been running the club's Hi-rail layout since he was 4 years old and the club's scale layout since he was 5. The scale layout even has a computerized command control system. His own personal equipment includes both Flyer and scale.

I received my first American Flyer set, a 302 Atlantic one, for Christmas 1952. Dan, his two older brothers and myself still operate this set on our 3-tier 6' x 14' layout in the basement of our home.

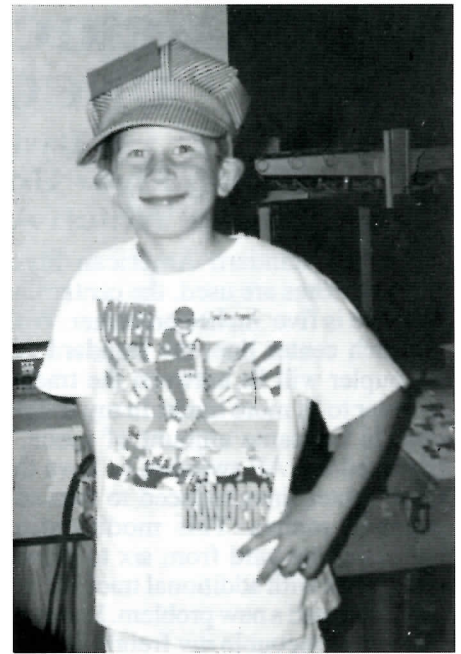
Young Dan received his first American Flyer equipment in 1992. This was also a 302 Atlantic with 6 freight cars which I picked up at a garage sale for \$35. He is now also the proud owner of some additional locomotives including a 353 AF Circus Pacific, a 21812 Baldwin and an American Models Conrail RS-3. He has several cars to go along with these locos.

Dad and Dan have a lot of fun running trains at the various shows where the Cuyahoga club is operating a layout. He says he likes running the scale layout and was evidenced by those who saw

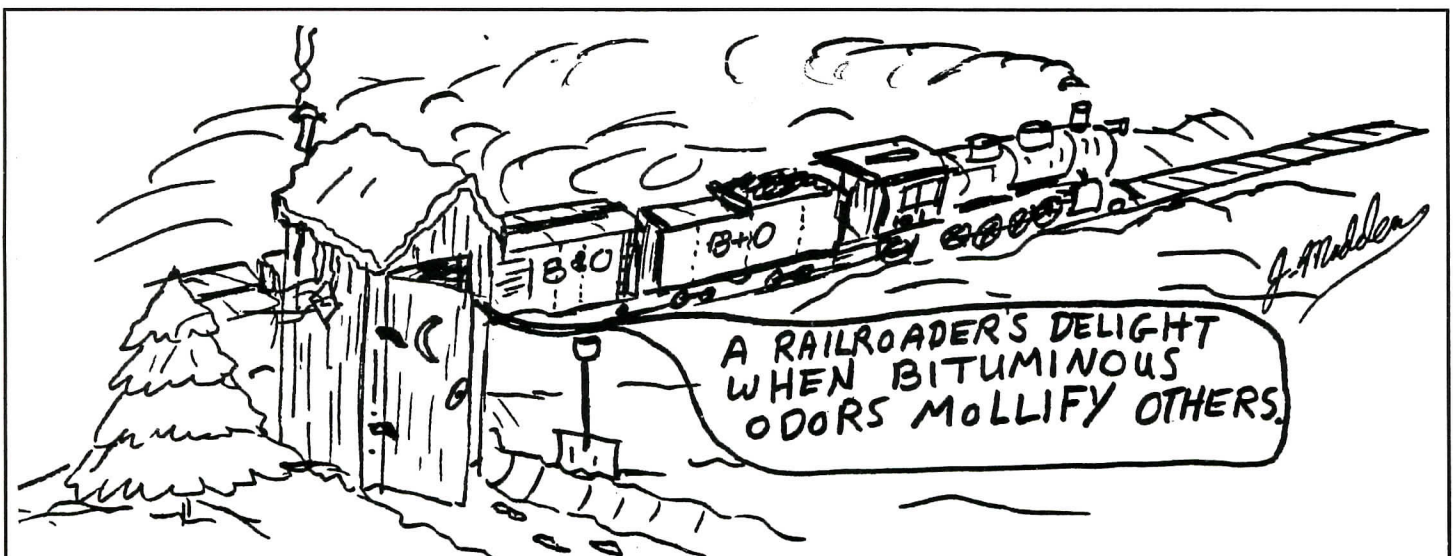
him operating that layout at Dearborn last summer.

So dad is passing the S gauge baton to son Dan in hopes that a future generation will carry on.

Dan Jansky at age 6 is a confident S gauge operator for the Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers.



Father and club secretary, Joe Jansky, likes to think that he is passing on an interest in model railroading and S gauge to his son.



AMERICAN FLYER UNCOUPLER

by David Avedesian

Fitting Flyer Uncouplers Between Tracks Which Are Closer Together

When the standard American Flyer (AF) switches are used, the center line distance is five inches on center. With a 5-inch center line, the standard AF uncoupler will fit between the tracks. In order to fit more tracks in my freight yard in the same amount of space, I modified my AF switches to have the track center lines reduced to two and one-half inches. This modification increased my yard from six to eleven tracks. But with additional tracks in my yard, I created a new problem. How was I going to uncouple my freight cars.

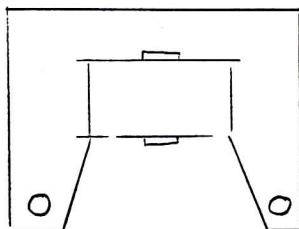
My first scheme was to build an L-shaped manual uncoupler. This uncoupler device would allow me to reach between the box cars and uncouple the cars. This worked fine, however, I desired a more automated system which could be controlled from my control panel.

The AF uncoupler is a very simple device. It works on two principals. One is the electromagnetic coil, and the other is that of a seesaw. When the coil is energized, the metal seesaw is pulled down on one end, and the uncoupler bar is lifted up on the other end. As we know when the bar is raised up, the knuckle coupler on the freight car is opened.

To modify the uncoupler, the coil needs to be removed and turned upside-down. When the coil is turned upside-down, the uncoupler will fit between the reduced track center lines. In order to fit the modified uncoupler between the tracks, we will need to cut a hole in the table for each uncoupler. I will describe the hole pattern later in this article.

Steps To Modifying The AF Uncoupler:

Note: All dimensions are measured from



the side of the uncoupler with the track clamp.

- 1) Drill out the four corner rivets.
- 2) Separate all the parts.
- 3) With the coil to the right and the clamp to the left, measure 2-3/8" from the clamp side edge and cut the top piece at this mark.
- 4) With the coil to the right and the clamp to the left, measure 2-11/16" from the clamp side edge and cut the bottom piece at this mark.
- 5) From the clamp side of the bottom piece, measure 2-1/4" and make a mark 1/8" from the side. At this mark, drill a 1/8" hole.
- 6) With a hammer, flatten the two metal corners on the coil piece.
- 7) With a pair of tin snips, cut on an angle an opening in front of the coil. This will allow the metal seesaw to rest in front of the upside-down coil. Please refer to Figure 1.
- 8) Next, with pop rivets, secure the clamp side of the top and bottom of the uncoupler with the uncoupler bar in place.
- 9) Line up the holes in the coil piece with the two new holes which you drilled in step 5, and drill a 1/8" hole through the top, bottom and coil pieces.

10) Place the seesaw upside-down under the uncoupler bar with a 3/16" spacer between the top and bottom piece and the upside-down coil in place, and then pop rivet all the pieces together.

11) The modified uncoupler is complete.

12) Installing the new uncoupler on your layout table will require cutting a square hole for the upside-down coil to fit.

13) Measure from the track centerline on your layout 1-1/4 and 2-3/8 inches and make a 1-1/8" square hole between these two marks.

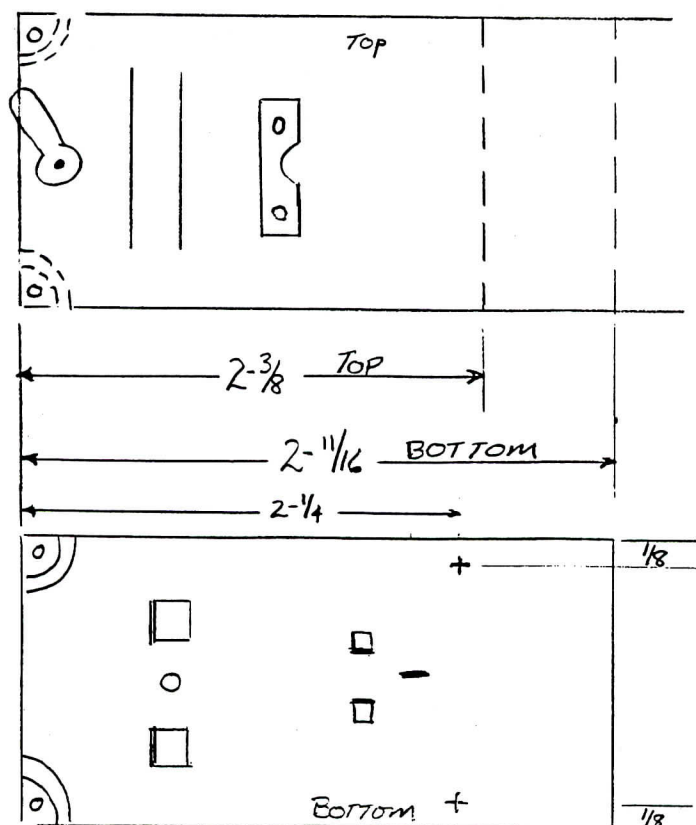
14) Sometimes you will have to slide the metal AF ties in order to get the new uncoupler to fit under the adjacent track.

15) Run the wires under the layout to your push button control panel.

Optional modification:

16) With some of the new American Model boxcars, the uncoupler shoes provided do not operate properly with the AF uncoupler. This can be corrected by inserting a small piece of wood strip in between the uncoupler bar.

Now, paint the wood strip flat black or brownish black and you will have a good looking uncoupler that works. For my layout I needed 22 of these uncouplers.



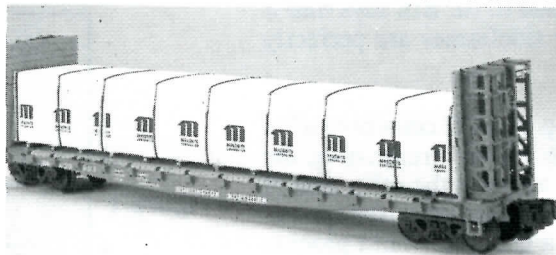


WHAT'S NEW?

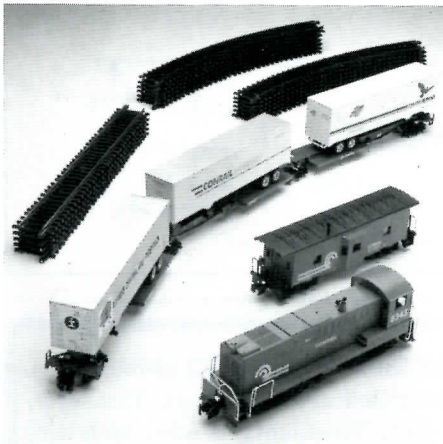
Below are three new freight cars from S Helper



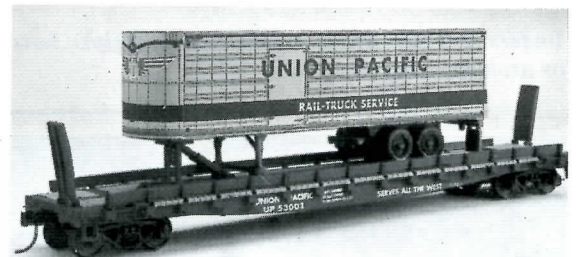
40' STEEL RE-BUILT BOXCAR



53'6" BULKHEAD
FLATCAR WITH
LOAD



PIGGY BACK
FLATCAR WITH
TRAILER



Above is American Models 2nd S gauge set which includes Conrail or SP Baldwin switcher and matching bay window caboose plus 3 piggyback spine cars. Scale or hi-rail at \$299.95 each.

Right is American Models 5 unit piggy back spine car set. The set is available only with UTTX yellow cars. \$159.95. Separate semi-trailers are available for \$11.95 each.



Short and Easy

by Kent L. Singer

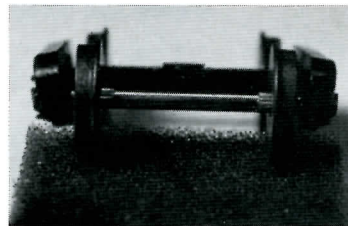
Improving the S-Helper Service Truck Sideframes

This issue's column comes to us from Bill Mark, Jr. Noticing that some S-Helper Service truck sideframes have a tendency to ride on the bolster a bit out of the vertical plane. See photo 1. Bill designed a simple fix. A pair of spacers fit right into the bolster to prevent the sideframes from moving out of the proper position. See photo 2.

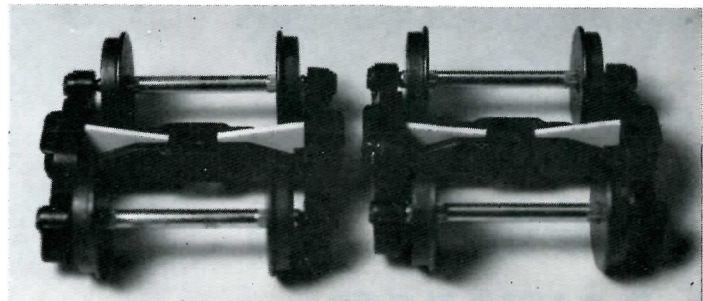
Cut and shape the 7/16" long spacers from .040" x 3/16" styrene as shown below. Insert the spacers into the slots between the bolster center and the sideframes. The narrow end may have to be trimmed to fit. Bill says that if you make the spacers so that the sideframes are perfectly square, the wheelsets fall out.

After the fit is correct, place a drop of ACC cement to affix the spacer end at the center of the bolster (remember, the sideframe has to be able to move about at the other end of the spacer). Some black paint will finish the job so the spacers will blend in. After you've done a few, the whole process should take about 5 minutes per truck.

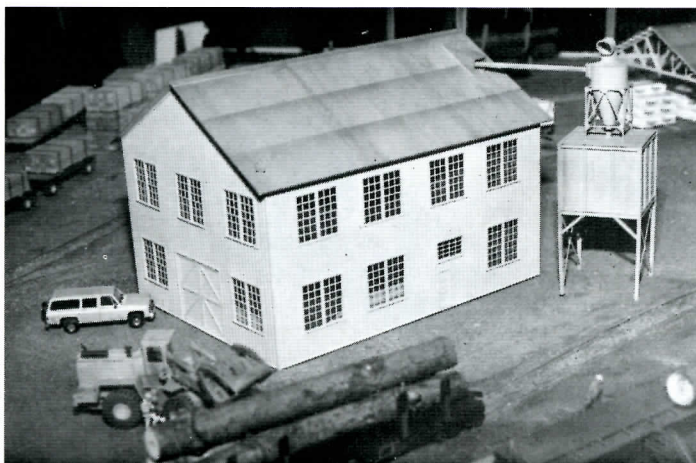
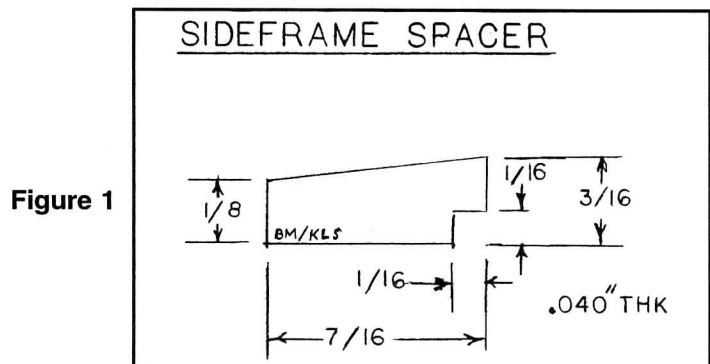
I understand that newer trucks from S-Helper have corrected this problem - Jeff.



Notice that the bottoms of the sideframes lean inward.



The spacers keep the sideframes near vertical.



Judge for yourself the usability in S of the new timber series offerings in HO from Walthers.

Final Notice for 1997 Election of NASG officers!

The 5 positions to be filled are: President, Treasurer, and the 3 regional Vice Presidents. NASG members are encouraged to nominate qualified candidates, including themselves. The formal nomination should include a summary of the qualifications of the candidate (not to exceed two hundred words) and be submitted not later than Dec. 31, 1996 to:

Doug Miller, NASG Elections Committee Chairman
371 Castleman Road
Vestal, NY 13850-6131

Note: If notice outdated, check with Doug?



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The 'S'traight & Narrow

From David L. Heine

News and Reviews on the Narrow Gauge Front

Loads In, Loads Out

Over the years I have learned that reading about, and observing the prototype, helps with modeling. This time, I am describing a problem that developed on my own railroad, and the inspiration from the prototype that finally satisfactorily solved it.

My Sn3 railroad, the Lehigh & Western, is supposed to haul coal as one of its main sources of revenue. When I designed it on paper, I planned to have a large mine at the town of Pottsville, and several more beyond the modeled railroad. Most of this coal is destined for the standard gauge interchange at Lehigh, where I had planned to build a large elevated coal transfer facility. This was to be one where the narrow gauge hopper cars are pushed up an incline. The coal is then dumped into bins which acts as temporary storage until the coal is dumped into standard gauge hoppers.

This was fine when the railroad was pencil lines on paper, however, when it was changed to flextrack on plywood, not everything worked out. I realized that to hold the grade to a reasonable level (like 10%!), I would have to start the siding in the town of Schweitzers across the isle. This was not acceptable to me. So I punted, and just installed a dual gauge siding at the interchange point. So much for the coal transfer trestle idea. On the plus side the siding did provide a location for other industries, but I was never happy with this arrangement.

I still needed a destination for the coal from Pottsville, but I took the easy way out and said its destination was a power plant beyond the layout, but still on the narrow gauge. The main disadvantage of this path, is that the coal doesn't go over the hill between Pottsville and Lehigh (and Schweitzers), and thus doesn't travel over a large portion of the modeled railroad. I had been planning to build a mine and a breaker at Pottsville, but as of this time I still had not built anything, except that the tracks were laid out to accommodate the Lehigh Valley Models breaker kit.

Now for the prototype. The East Broad Top, a 3' gauge railroad in Pennsylvania, hauled coal for a major part of its revenue. It hauled mine run coal to a breaker/cleaning plant at Mount Union. At the plant the coal was washed, crushed, and graded. It was then loaded by size into standard gauge hopper cars which were hauled away by the Pennsylvania Railroad. In this case, there was actually no penalty for being narrow gauge, since the coal had to be unloaded and loaded anyway. If coal was needed for a destination on the EBT, it actually had to be loaded back into a narrow gauge hopper and hauled to its final destination. This is actually a case of **loads in and loads out!**

Then inspiration struck. I could do something similar at Lehigh. I knew a scale model of the plant at Mount Union would be

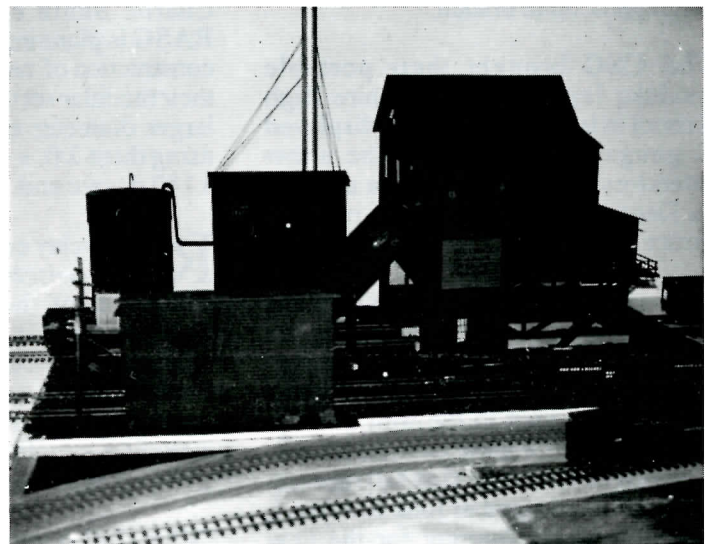
too big for the space available, but I did have that Lehigh Valley Models mine kit. I could use it instead, but with some modifications. So I came up with a plan for a major revision at Lehigh. I built the breaker as designed, and ran one standard gauge and one dual gauge track under its loading positions. That way I could also load narrow gauge cars with cleaned and sorted coal for on-line destinations. I modified the minehead building by making it larger so that it could accommodate two 3' gauge tracks, for unloading the mine run coal. This was same idea as the EBT, but in a much smaller space. The L&W management is also happier with this new arrangement, since they get a much longer run, and in some cases can run loaded hoppers in both directions.

While I was at it, I was able to make the tracks that run under the breaker long enough to accommodate an overhead transfer crane. Since one of these tracks is dual gauge and the other standard only, I can also use this as another transfer point between the standard and 3' gauge railroads. The EBT had a similar facility at Mount Union, known as the Timber Transfer. This was originally used to transfer lumber from narrow gauge to standard gauge cars. In later years, this was used to lift standard gauge cars so that narrow gauge trucks could be placed under them. The EBT did this so that they did not have to transfer the cargo. While coal was not a problem, other incoming loads had to be transferred. In my case, the transfer crane was another Lehigh Valley Models kit.

As far as the mine at Pottsville is concerned, all I need to do is build a loading structure. I will probably use one of the ones on the EBT as the basis for this model also.

More recently, I discovered that there were cases where standard gauge hoppers full of mine run coal actually were hauled to a breaker where the coal was graded and cleaned, and finally, the graded coal was hauled away in the same hoppers. Imagine, loaded hoppers in which you don't need to remove the loads! There is a prototype for everything.

Comments/contributions: Dave Heine, 5758 Bel Air Dr., Coopersburg, Pa. E-mail: a322@lehigh.edu



Dave Heine's coal breaker on his Lehigh & Western will mimic the East Broad Top at Mt. Union, Pennsylvania. The EBT unloaded coal and then the washed coal was loaded into PRR standard gauge hoppers.

"Where We Make Tasty Sandwiches Of Your Club News"

THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

The holiday season is upon us again, and all our S gauge clubs have been, and will be busy with the holiday and winter seasons. Alan Evans, president of our NASG, wrote a column for the **Central Ohio S Gaugers** *News* entitled *Looking Down the Tracks* in which he mentioned upcoming things in Ohioland. Alan suggested a group Christmas dinner including spouses or friends. Maybe we'll find out later if they really did. Sounds like a good idea.

Let's check out the ingredients for the various clubs' sandwiches for this busy season....

The **Conn. S Gaugers (CSG)** held a meeting at the home of Hank Roos in late October. Hank has an S scale layout which is modeled after the Central RR of New Jersey. His father was a tugboat captain on the Central RR of N.J. and Hank likes that railroad as his prototype. The Central RR of New Jersey had those unique steam locomotives which had the engineer's cab in the center over the boiler and were called camelbacks. Your column editor always had a soft spot for those unique locos and can remember them from weekends past spent in central New Jersey waiting for the morning commuter rush on the Atlantic Highlands shore branch.

The **CSG** brought their portable modular layout to the Cheshire High School in late November and displayed S gauge operations for the show attendees. The group plans a meeting in December at the home of member Bruce Carter.

The **Bristol S Gauge RRers (BSGR)** had the opportunity of visiting the famed model train layout of George Sellios in Peabody, MA. Jay Rogers arranged the visit to the well detailed and highly published HO model RR. The **BSGR** held their first fall meeting at the home of member John Karajczyk and they were planning for the new "season" of S gauge activities, including the Big Railroad Hobby Show sponsored by the Amherst Railway Society in early February. The group

has set up their portable layout at this show and advertised S gauge to the hundreds and hundreds of attendees.

Ted Larson edits the newsletter for the **Rochester Area S Gaugers (RASG)** and reported on the fall kickoff meeting held at the home of Gregg, Colleen, & Drew Mummert of Cowlesville, N.Y. The meeting was held at this location because it is halfway between Rochester and Buffalo, N.Y., and they hoped to draw from the far western N.Y. S - gauge residents. Gregg Mummert showed off an S scale Thomas the Tank engine with body by Ertl and running gear from an AF Casey Jones loco. The group went to a neighbor's house to see an AF layout and train collection. What luck to hold a meeting at a member's house who just happened to have a neighbor with an S gauge layout and collection!

The **RASG** are planning to set up their modular layout at no less than five upcoming area train shows and public meetings. Their newsletter includes a listing of several articles in model railroading magazines recently published covering some of the rolling stock available to S gaugers. Walt Danylak of the **Syracuse S Gaugers (SSG)** came to "Town" (Rochester, I presume) and met with Ted Larson and Charlie Smith of the **RASG**. The **RASG** is planning and undertaking the construction of new corner modules for their modular set up. They are planning larger diameter end modules and are using three 2 ft. x 4 ft. modules to build a 180 degree end.

R.K. Barclay edited a recent issue of *The S-witchback* which is the newsletter of the **Lehigh Valley S Gaugers (LVSG)**. The group has a new 40 ft. box car custom lettered in the Lehigh Valley scheme. They offer several options for ordering the cars including couplers, etc. Contact the LVSG group to order yours.

The *Call Board* is the newsletter of the **Potomac Valley S Gaugers (PVSG)**, and the group held a recent meeting and get together at the home of Wayne and Toni Shipp in Falls

Church, VA. At their meeting they set up S gauge modules and watched videos together. Members Bill Oertly and Tom Riddle set up and operated Bill's S gauge layout at the local Science Museum of Virginia annual train show. This was a good way to showcase the S gauge train advantage. They like to have three or four operators available at all times during the show, which ran for two weekends in November each day the museum was open from 10 until 5.

PVSG's Richard Lind, who does an excellent job of organizing their newsletter, has had problems with the flood plain of the Potomac River, on which his house is located. Richard is in the process of re-locating to another dwelling "in town" where the constant ravages of the flood water will not be a factor. Good luck with your efforts Richard and applause for a fine newsletter.

The **Baltimore Area American Flyer Club (BAAFC)** met for lunch at the York, PA. TCA train meet in October. The group set up their modular layout at the TTOS Northern Virginia meet in early November and at the Greenberg Train & Toy Show in Timonium, MD. in early December. They set up a layout at the John Hopkins Children's Center in December. The **BAAFC** attended and set up their portable layout at the TTOS Meet in Annapolis, MD. in mid-December.

The group attended a meeting at Carver's, in Gettysburg, PA. where AF trains are repaired and sold. They got to view the collection of AF trains and talk over S gauge trains and their repair. Sounds like a good get together where useful information could be obtained about repairing and maintaining AF trains. Harwood Owings is hosting the group's December meeting. Ron Kolb does the newsletter editing and composing for the group.

The **Suncoast American Flyer Enthusiasts (SAFE)** is active advertising S gauge and enjoying group fellowship. Carl R. Liebich, an "associate" member of the group, passed away in October. He was a retired architect and helped construct the Twin Horn Mountain R.R. at the Bittman house. He will be missed, and was a good friend to the **SAFE** group.

The **SAFE** group also attended the Sarasota Model R.R. Club show at the

Palmetto Civic Center in early December. They are planning to attend the GATS Show at the Tampa Fairgrounds on Dec. 28 & 29.

The Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers(CASG) had a meeting in October at the Walter Lutheran High School in Melrose Park. The group is looking for a site for their train meet which can accomodate the crowds and be rented at a reasonable cost. Dave Sengenberger, secretary of the group, went to England to visit his daughter and son-in-law and to go to an S gauge meet there. Art Doty reports on local train meets and train related activities in their area and out of the area, at their meetings. Maybe he advised Dave about the S gauge train meet in England!

The Central Ohio S Gaugers(COSG) took their portable layout to the Marion Fairgrounds Train Show and the Springfield Train Show. The group also went to the Franklin County Fairgrounds TTOS show in early December, setting up their portable layout there.

COSG member Mike McPherson is working on an S gauge layout to be featured in Upper Sandusky's Christmas Open Houses in the Town on Dec. 8. NASG Pres./COSG member Alan Evans writes a column for the COSG News which highlights shows that the group will attend and new members to the group.

The Cuyahoga Valley S Gauge Assoc.(CVSGA) had their annual Christmas Party in early December at the Holiday Inn, Middlebury Heights, Ohio. Motel rooms are available for those attendees who become over enthusiastic about S gauge and cannot drive home. The motel offered special "Don't Drink and Drive" room rates for the event. Barbara Hribar-Koschki coordinated the reservations for the event.

Lee McCarty of CVSGA coordinated the scheduling of members to set up and operate their original sectional layout at the Cleveland City Hall from Dec. 21 through 30. This is a major fund raiser and a very good way to advertise the group and their activities in S gauge. The layout was operational from 10:00 A.M. until 5:00 or 7:00 P.M. on many days during this period.

The CVSGA participated in an excellent promotional activity for S gauge, which was partially sponsored by the NASG, by setting up and operating a layout at the National Model & Hobby Show in mid-October. Besides the CVSGA layout, S gauge was represented by several manufacturers who displayed their products and answered questions about the trains. The CVSGA ran up to six standard gauge and two narrow gauge trains including switching in the yards on their modular layout.

The State Line S Gaugers(SLSG) held their Nov. meeting at the home of Dave Pippitt, and brought their operating layout to the 21st Annual Fall S Fest held in late-November in Milwaukee. Dave Oberholtzer and Joe McGrath coordinated this effort. The group had their holiday party at the Cliffbreakers in Rockford. The SLSG planned to attend the Badgerland S Gaugers Swap Meet at the Red Carpet Lanes in Waukesha in late December.

The Badgerland S Gaugers(BSG) held their Dec. meeting at the home of Jim Brown. The group did not have an official meeting in November since the NMRA Trainfest show was held during this time period. Dick Kloes of the BSG is building a large and detailed home layout, which was described in the club newsletter. This group has been

together for 22 years, which is amazing.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers(SMSG) held a meeting at the home of Brooks Stover in Rochester Hills, MI. in Sept. The Buffalo Creek & Gauley R.R. built by the host was enjoyed and operated by the SMSG. Dale Baker hosted a meeting of the group in Owosso, MI.

A recent issue of the *S-Say* newsletter, edited by John Eichmann of the **Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers(RMHR)**, describes activities of that group. They attended the 1996 Toy Show at the Western Idaho Fairgrounds in November. A layout was set up and operated to advertise S gauge and provide enjoyment for the members. John included a well-written article describing his philosophy on S gauge railroading in the Nov. issue of the newsletter. It relates mutts(dogs) to his attempts at rehabilitating AF trains. It struck a sympathetic note with your column editor in that such activity is very rewarding to do. And it saves old AF trains that are not made any more.

Cliff Baxter of the Inland Empire S Gaugers Assoc. coordinated a holiday dinner at the Old Country Buffet in the Franklin Park Mall in December. The group visited Jess Bennett and witnessed his Great Northern Pacific S gauge layout in the Fall.



Last March the State Line S Gaugers (Rockford, IL) held their Golden Spike ceremony for their newly constructed S-Mod layout at the Rock River Valley NMRA show. At present the completed modules form a 10' x 21' oval with a lower level of double track American Models track and an elevated single track line of American Flyer track. Height is intentionally modified to 30" to be at a prime height for young viewers. Higher legs can be swapped out if desired. Shown left to right are Joe McGrath, Earl Beagle, Tim Oberholtzer, Dave Pippitt and Dave Oberholtzer. The layout had its third outing at the recent Milwaukee S-Fest.

Art followed up a few hours later with this additional e-mail:

About two hours after I sent that last e-mail, I looked in my postal mailbox and found the August and October issues of *S/Sn3 Modeling Guide*. What a thrill! I feel much more comfortable about my switch to S now, as I am becoming more exposed to the scale end of things. There are some great articles and informative ads in the *Guide*.

I still have questions but am eager to proceed anyway. I think part of the appeal of S scale is that you can't just run down to the local hobby shop and buy another car. It takes some planning and some looking around.

I asked you about PBL, and the August issue (mentioned above) had an article about building a PBL narrow gauge tank car - perfect.

Plus, I saw a picture in an ad of the Southwind Niagara import which now gives me more confidence about ordering their SP 2-8-0.

S scale may represent a small percentage of model builders, but based on what I have seen in these few days since I sent my first appeal out over the internet newsgroup rec. models. railroads, that small group is really on the ball.

Art Armstrong

This e-mail point up perfectly what a newcomer to S goes through initially. Note that he was starving for ads, publications and information about S. Those manufacturers and members with access to e-mail might try answering some of Art's questions. I will respond as well with the answers I can come up with. - Jeff

Have Modules, Will Travel

I am in the process of building four corner modules per the article in the February *Dispatch*. Come next Spring, somewhere around April 1, I intend to have these up and running. If any local group in my area needs some, let me know.

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EXTRA BOARD

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PROJECT

From a letter to John Foley.

I want to thank you for taking the time to write and remind me that I had not renewed my membership to the NASG. I didn't realize that I had dropped from the membership rolls. I do wish to stay current. I enjoy the magazine and am an avid A.C. Gilbert S gauger.

Enclosed is a photo of the Christmas layout I have put up for the last four years. The project takes me approximately 5 weeks to assemble. It is put up for the enjoyment of kids and their grandparents. The kids can operate 5 different S gauge trains, a log loader, whistle station and talking station.

The layout is a double deck affair that is installed in the living room and runs along our front bay window so it is visible from the outside. The top deck has an American Flyer Franklin set running through a Department 56 Dickens Village Houses. My wife collects the houses, and the scale is just about right for S. The track actually runs over the bay window ledge on this level. The bottom (almost floor level) also has a loop of track with a Flyer train and accessories.

I will leave the layout up until the middle of January and then take it down until next November, when I will start all over again. Every year is a challenge, and there is something new to look at. I really enjoy watching the kids' faces when they operate the trains.

Robert Anoka, Boiling Springs, PA.

ATTENTION S MANUFACTURERS!
Model Railroad News, P.O. box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532, is offering S manufacturers (not dealers) a substantial discount to place ads in their hobby news publication. Write them for a media kit and mention that you are an S manufacturer. Thanks to John Metzger for this info.

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S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

From Ted Larson comes a list of recent hobby magazines which have articles pertaining to many of the recent rolling stock offerings.

-52'6" mill gon (AM) - Jan. '96 *Railmodel Journal* (RMJ).

-50' double door box (PRS) - Mar. & July '96 RMJ and July *Mainline Modeler* (MM).

-PRR X-29 boxcars and GP9 detail parts - Mar. '96 RMJ.

-50s tank cars (Des Plaines Hobbies) - April & Aug. '96 RMJ and April '96 MM.

-Triple hoppers (AF) - May '96 RMJ.

-Modified 1937 AAR 40' boxcars (PSR) - Aug & Oct. '96 RMJ. Part 1 for the 10'6" cars was in the Feb. '95 issue. The 10'0" cars were covered by RMJ back in July '91.

-Western Fruit Express reefers - April & May '96 MM.

-Early piggyback flats - June, Oct. '96 MM.

SCENERY BOOK REVIEW

Realistic Scenery for Toy Train Layouts

Written by Dave Frary and published by Kalmbach Publishing Co. (\$18.95), this new book on basic scenery techniques is aimed at the tinplate market.

Although all the photos in the book show Lionel trains and (cough, cough) 3-rail track, this can be a good scenery primer book for S American Flyer or Hi-rail modelers who haven't yet gained much experience in scenicking their layouts.

It's an easier read and covers model railroad scenery methods in less detail than books aimed at the fine-scale crowd. Included in this 96-page softcover book are chapters on tools, ballast, ground cover, mountains, roads, trees, water, structures and backdrops. There is also a list of suppliers and manufacturers which is helpful for those just getting into the scenery phase.

While this book is well illustrated with color photos, S gaugers will have to mentally substitute S for Lionel O gauge. But scenery is scenery no matter what gauge.

This book should also be helpful to module builders who want some quick and easy methods for scenicking. For example, a section on styrofoam insulation board gives tips on lightweight scenery, and the tree section goes over how to improve those hardy bottle-brush trees.

-Jeff Madden

FREEDOM TRAIN PROJECT

In the fall of 1993, Dan Gills, Roland Gills and Andrew Jugle began to work on a project dedicated to Andrew's late father, Pete Jugle. This was the creation of an American Flyer equipped Freedom Train using a PA and passenger cars to recreate the 1947 special train which ran around the country that year.

The project started with 20 original flyer Alco PA shells - 6 closed coupler A units, 6 open-ended A units and 8 B units. Like the 1947 originals, these were painted white with blue and red horizontal striping. Over the years some of these original s were sold or auctioned off by the Chicagoland club.

Now you can purchase some painted A and B units (shells only) to make up your own 1947 Freedom Train. A set is also available which includes an A&B unit and 7 custom designed and decorated passenger style cars. The A&B shells can be used on either Flyer or scale power chassis. Repro A units - \$125 ppd. B units (some original) - \$100 ppd. Set with 7 cars - \$532 ppd.

Contact L. Andrew Jugle, 327 Highland Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126 (630) 833-5394 or Roland Gills, 4418 W. Montrose Ave., Chicago, IL 60641 (773) 283-6945.

S-CALENDAR

February 1-2, 1997: Amherst Railway Society Big RR Hobby Show. West Springfield, MA

February 14-16, 1997: 12th annual Sn3 Symposium. Contact Don Stewart, 2722 E. Bighorn, Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85048.

March 1-2, 1997: Topeka, Kansas, Model Railroaders Swap Meet and Train Show. Modular layouts and over 200 dealer tables expected. Larger area than last year. S Flyer and scale will be there for sale plus other scales. Exhibition Hall, Kansas Expo Centre, 19th St. and South Topeka Blvd. Sat. 9-3, Sunday 10-3. Contact Duane McDaniel, 201 N. E. Walnut Grove, Topeka, KS 66617. (913) 286-1339.

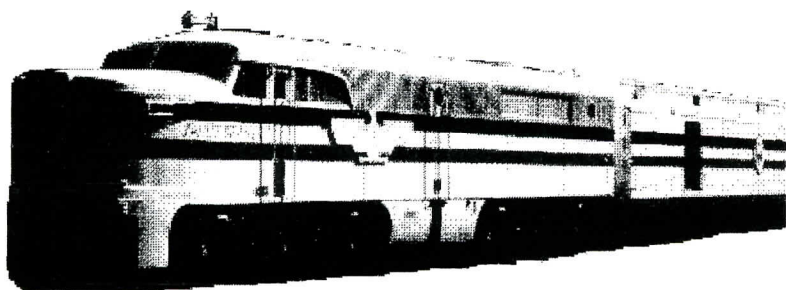
May 15-18, 1997: 10th Annual Spring S Spree. Holiday Inn, Richfield, Ohio (Cleveland area) sponsored by the Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers. For registration packet contact: Gary Ippolito, 5311 New Haven Ct., Sheffield, OH 44054. (216) 934-0349. E-mail: gippolito @ Clev.frb.org

July 9-13, 1997: NASG National Convention in Westminster, Colorado (Denver area). The Denver Zephyr '97 convention will be held at the Denver Northglenn Holiday Inn, East 120th and I-25, on the north side. Registration forms will be inserted in the December *Dispatch*. For information contact Glenn Sponholtz, 4550 W. 90th Ave., Westminster, CO 80030. (303) 427-2976.

July 9-12, 1998: NASG National Convention in Worcester, Mass.

July 28-Aug. 2, 1997: NMRA National Convention, "The Lake Junction", Madison, WI. Contact Ross E. Pollock, Registrar, 3539 Mill Creek Road, Mineral Point, WI 53565. (608) 987-3396 or Toll free 888-525-3528.

Bids Open for NASG National Conventions -- 1999, 2000 and beyond. Contact Dave Held, Convention Chairman, 6939 Yorktown Ln., Utica, MI 49318. (810) 739-2932.



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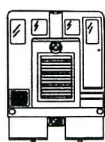
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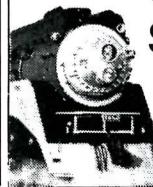
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