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July 2018

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**CLASSIC TOY
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Launching a new train show

THE INTERNATIONAL TOY TRAIN EXPO IS ON TRACK FOR THIS SUMMER

A dreary refrain, and one I've gotten tired of hearing, involves the allegedly impending demise of the hobby. These self-ordained prophets of doom tell me nobody is interested in trains (full-size or model) anymore. They often add, "And train shows are withering on the vine."

Well, color me skeptical.

Why? Because I've seen something you don't see every day: the announcement of a brand-new regional train show – the International Toy Train Expo, which will be held this summer in Eau Claire, Wis.

Organizing a train show from scratch is an immense undertaking. You don't jump into a task like that without a healthy sense of optimism about the hobby's future.

Among the Expo's sponsors is the home-improvement (and train-making) chain Menards, which is headquartered in Eau Claire. A local hobby shop, Model



THE INTERNATIONAL TOY TRAIN EXPO

WHEN: Sat., July 7 and Sun., July 8, 2018
WHERE: Chippewa Valley Expo Center, 5150 Old Mill Plaza, Eau Claire, Wis. 54703
TICKETS: Advance - \$2.50 (from Menards retail outlets or www.Menards.com.) Same day - \$5. Children under 18 admitted free.
MORE INFO: www.InternationalToyTrainExpo.com.



Train Classics of Eau Claire, is handling the arrangements.

Operation Life Saver, the railroad safety awareness program, is also on board as cosponsor.

Kalmbach Media, the publisher of *Classic Toy Trains*, *Model Railroader*, *Trains*, *Garden Railways*, *Classic Trains*, and *Model Railroader Video Plus*, is the exclusive media partner for the International Toy Train Expo.

We will be there, joining a long list of retailers, clubs with operating layouts, and manufacturers that heard about the show

and immediately stepped up. Exhibitor space in the 53,000-square-foot Chippewa Valley Expo Center sold out four months before the event!

Model railroading is a hobby in which one can participate in as much – or as little – as one wishes. You can be creative or minimalist. You can duplicate a prototype in miniature or run trains on a simple oval of track. There are no rules – just the fun you have on your own terms.

It is terrific that a new event, and one organized with a solid plan for the future, will be rocking the Wisconsin/Minnesota border this summer. See you at the Expo!

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CLASSIC TOY TRAINS

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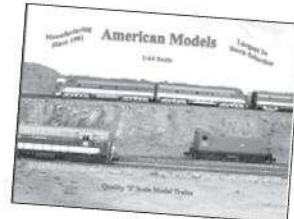
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LETTERS

FROM OUR READERS

LIONEL IN 1950 AND A.C. GILBERT'S SHELBURNE MUSEUM LAYOUT



As shown in this recent photograph, Bob Banks has continued to improve his O gauge salute to 1950 Lionel, featured in the May issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. It now features additional Lionel accessories, along with many period Plasticville buildings, roads, vehicles, and figures, while staying true to its "old school" style of scenery. Photo courtesy Bob Banks

vehicles — all using my simple "old school" approach to such items but a big improvement nonetheless.

I have included a photo of the current layout from the

vantage point of the opening photo you used on pages 48 and 49 so your readers can see the improvements.

Thanks again for a great article!

Bob Banks
Lake Bluff, Ill.

It's wonderful to see a layout that I (and I'm sure many others) can relate to. Not all of us can build, afford, or find room for most of the hi-rail layouts usually featured in the pages of *Classic Toy Trains*.

Bob Banks' display (May issue) is more like what I have in my basement. *This* is the sort of layout I dreamed of while looking at those Lionel catalogs way back when. I say Bravo to him, and thank you, CTT, for this article.

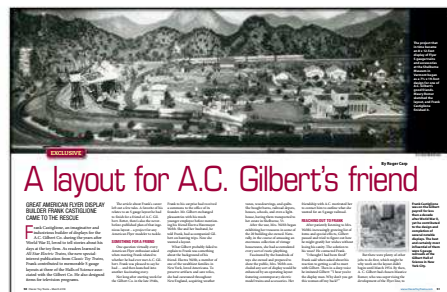
Art Young
New Freedom, Pa.

Layout salutes 1950 Lionel

I greatly enjoyed the fine article about my layout and 1950 Lionel O gauge collection in the May issue of *Classic Toy Trains* ("Build a layout that highlights 1950 Lionel"). However, my one regret about the

article is that CTT used an older "mid-development" photograph of the layout showing a rather barren landscape.

I have since added more Lionel accessories, many period Plasticville buildings, landscaping, roads, figures and



Museum Flyer display

I want to thank Roger Carp for his article, "A layout for A.C. Gilbert's Friend," in the March issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. I especially enjoyed seeing Maury Romer's drawing of the planned layout. Those must have been amazing days working to display such a huge collection of Americana and have the trains fit in perfectly. I am

sure that Frank Castiglione never forgot his time in Vermont!

I am part of a group of volunteers that built and maintains the current American Flyer display layout at the Shelburne Museum. Of course, I am very familiar with the story of how Electra Havemayer Webb twisted A.C. Gilbert's arm to build and install a "modern" model railroad to go with her collection of antique toys. You can find A.C. Gilbert's name in the guest book of her Vermont home. Those two must have been a quite a pair!

Ed Bianchi
South Burlington, Vt.

Look for an article on the current Shelburne Museum S gauge layout in an upcoming issue of CTT.

— Editor

Massive power

In the May Product Reviews, Associate Editor Bob Keller discusses the massive size and strength of the Chesapeake & Ohio 2-6-6-6.



On page 57, Bob states the tender has six-wheel trucks. However in the accompanying photograph one can clearly see the rear tender truck actually has eight wheels. This gives the locomotive an even mightier appearance, much like the centipede tenders of the New York Central.

Jim Steed
Blairsville, Ga.

Correction

As always, the detailed description of the Lionel no. 204 steam engine and tender (May Collectible Classics) was very enlightening and enjoyable.

However there was one minor error. The 2018 edition of *Greenberg's Pocket*

Price Guide to Lionel Trains values the gunmetal gray version at \$180 in excellent condition and \$165 in good condition. The article had those values reversed.

This certainly did not detract from the fine article!

Brian Dugan
Bay City, Mich.

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21976	Centennial 4-4-2 Steam Freight (sealed).....	195.00
21988	NYC Hudson Frt w/Railroads -O Gauge Track.....	395.00
31902	Penna. K-4 Steam Freight w/O-Gauge Track.....	495.00
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17459	Virginian TMCC Rectifier Hopper Set.....	295.00
21758	Bethlehem Steel Service Station (sealed).....	395.00
21788	Missile Launch Set (Postwar Celebration).....	395.00
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31712	U.P. PA Alco Aluminum Passenger Set-TMCC.....	995.00
31714	Amtrak Acela Passenger Set (sealed).....	1795.00
31736	C.P. Rail Grain Train Set.....	795.00
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83092	Bethlehem Steel City Steam/Freight LEGACY.....	1074.95

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26652	NYC Green Gondola w/Yellow Canisters.....	15.95
26672	Penna. Flatcar w/REA Piggyback Trailers.....	34.95
36650	Penna. Porthole (RED) Caboose.....	25.00
36672	Norfolk Southern Porthole Caboose.....	29.95
37034	NYC Operating Helicopter Car.....	29.95
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81484	John Deere Lighted Caboose.....	39.95
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82326	Western Maryland WoodChip Hopper Car.....	44.95
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83055	Lehigh Valley Coil Covered Gondola.....	44.95
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38091	Norfolk Pacific Lionmaster Challenger.....	650.00
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18615	Grand Trunk 4-4-2.....	100.00
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▲ GEORGE FLANAGAN'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

The creek catches your attention first, thanks to the strands of ice and bare branches along its banks. George Flanagan created the murky waters to leave the powerful impression of an industrial town in decline, with pollution and uncertainty characterizing life there. Then, of course, you note the pair of Norfolk Southern SD70M-2 road diesels braking around the curve. George, whose O gauge layout will be showcased in an upcoming issue of *Classic Toy Trains*, has lightly weathered his MTH models so they fit with the general environment he's modeling on his Linganore Valley RR in New Market, Md.



▲ CHRISTOPHER DE AUGUSTINE'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

Every engineer knows the pleasures of sitting in the cab of a powerful locomotive as it rolls along a beautifully maintained route under clear skies and without a grade crossing in sight. O gauge enthusiast Christopher DeAugustine, who is responsible for operating this pair of CSX road diesels developed by MTH Electric Trains, captured the fun on his O gauge railroad in West Chester, Pa. The lead unit is a replica of a General Electric ES44AC-H.

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

PLEASE SEND your best pictures to CTT Photo Album, 21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612 or email them to photoalbum@ClassicToyTrains.com. Digital photos must be taken with the camera set at the largest-possible file size. Include your name, address, and daytime telephone number; a description of each image; and the name of the photographer or layout owner. If your photo is published, we will pay you \$50 as long as we have not previously bought the photo.

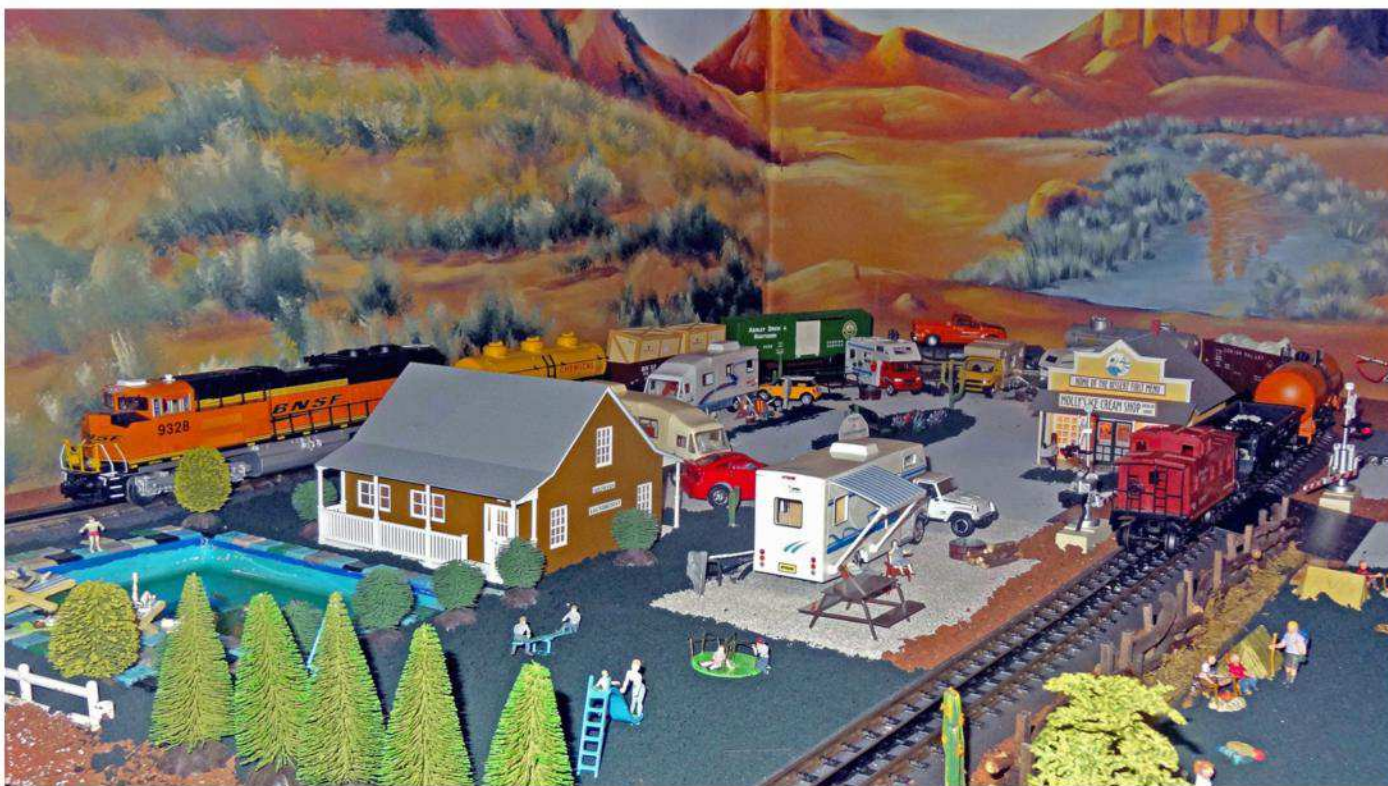
For help on taking pictures, go to **www.ClassicToyTrains.com/SubmissionGuidelines**. That will lead you to a number of tips on improving your photographic skills as well as assistance with depth-of-field, lighting, and composition.

PHOTO ALBUM



◀ ALAN SAKALAS' O GAUGE LAYOUT

A Baltimore & Ohio 2-8-2 light Mikado from Lionel prepares to leave town on the point of a short freight. Alan Sakalas photographed this night scene on the Basement & Southern Ry., a layout he built at his home in Cincinnati, Ohio. Alan says the 8 x 14-foot O gauge railroad is the culmination of his 60 years in the hobby and a tribute to the store displays he recalled from his childhood in Parkville, Md.



▲ MARVIN STROM'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

The residents of Marvin Strom's O gauge wonderland can spend their summer days camping in the mountains, swimming in the town's pool, or hiking in the nearby desert. A few people are content to just stay home, grab lawn chairs and admire the BNSF freight trains that rumble past on a regular basis. Bruce Strom joined them to photograph the three-rail activity on the model railroad his father constructed in Elgin, Ill.



▲ LARRY POLAND'S STANDARD GAUGE LAYOUT

The mining vignette on the upper level of Larry Poland's Standard gauge layout in Carol Stream, Ill., makes clever use of an American Flyer tunnel and a Lionel no. 33 electric with no. 116 hoppers. Nearby, a Milwaukee Road *Hiawatha* from Lionel slips by the edge of Larry's home display. Pretty cool how he has embellished the Lionel no. 840 industrial power station with smoke and a sign from Miller Engineering.

◀ RICH GABRYSZEWSKI'S S GAUGE LAYOUT

An S gauge railroad showcasing trains from the postwar and modern eras in only 32 square feet? Rich Gabryszewski has pulled off a feat that seems as unlikely as these American Flyer Texas & Pacific GP7 road diesels outpacing a recent model of a Chicago & North Western SD60. An article on Rich's layout in Gettysburg, Pa., is coming soon in *Classic Toy Trains*.



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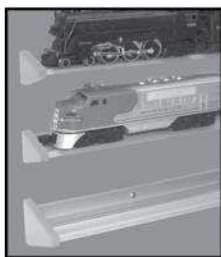


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Project layout unveiled

LIGHTS, CAMERA, TRAINS ... CONSTRUCTION!

Pssst! Can you keep a secret? In my experience, asking someone to do that is one way to make sure discrete intel gets broadcast far and wide. Which is why I couldn't possibly (wink, wink) tell you about a top-secret way to see insider details of the all-new O gauge project layout soon to appear in the September 2018 *Classic Toy Trains*!

It's so hard for me to avoid shouting it out, but YES, staff members from CTT and MR Video Plus recently teamed up to build the City Terminal & Transfer Railway (CT&T), a small 5 x 9-foot layout that's really big on city scenery.

As readers know from previous projects I've tackled, the associated articles printed in CTT will include plans, photos, and a plethora of information to help you build the same layout we did. But if you want to see how we put the railroad

together, there's only one not-so-hidden portal where you can do that right now!

Exclusively on the MRVideoPlus.com video-streaming subscription website is where we've already released instructional videos that reveal the steps for each stage of assembly. Need proof that this isn't just idle gossip? Click on the link MRVideoPlus.com/CTTP1 to see for yourself. That's where you'll find me and master craftsman David Popp tackling the benchwork and CTT's Bob Keller laying down the three-rail main line. Later, even MRVP talent Jenny Maaske gets involved in adding urban details!

So now that the secret is out, be sure you subscribe to MRVideoPlus.com so you'll be able to enjoy the entire project layout series this summer. And whatever you do, don't tell a single soul ... tell several what they're missing! **CTT**

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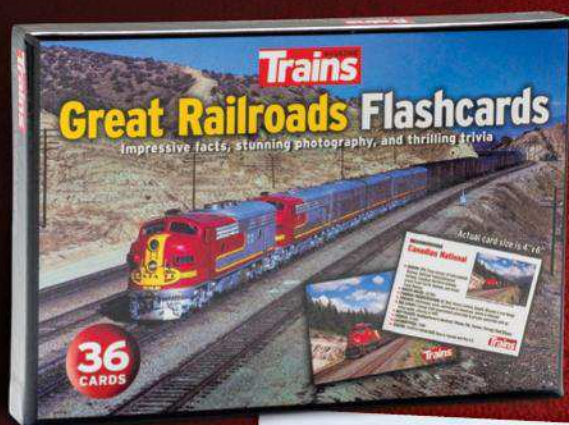


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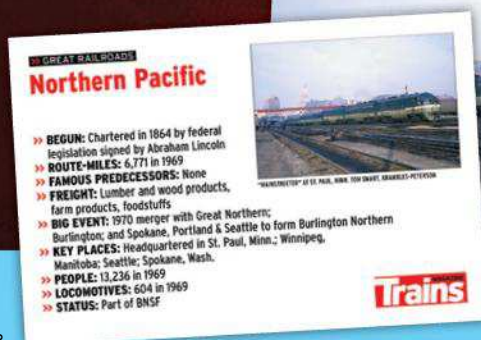
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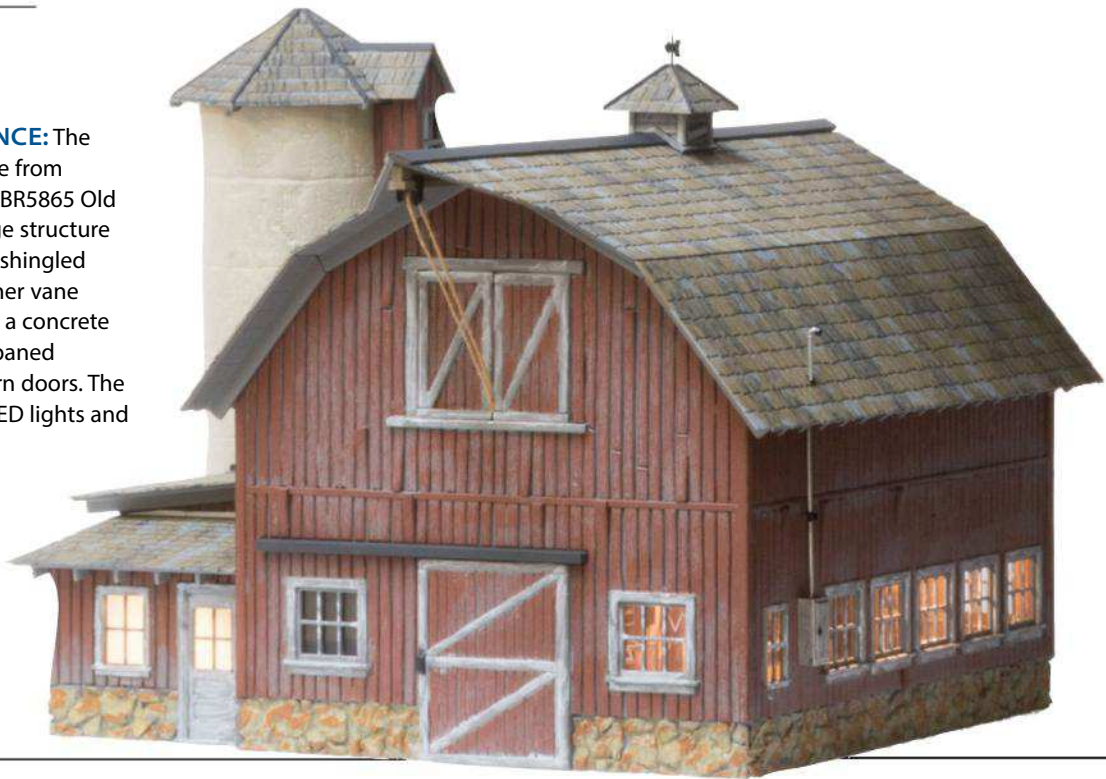


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PRODUCT NEWS

WITH BOB KELLER

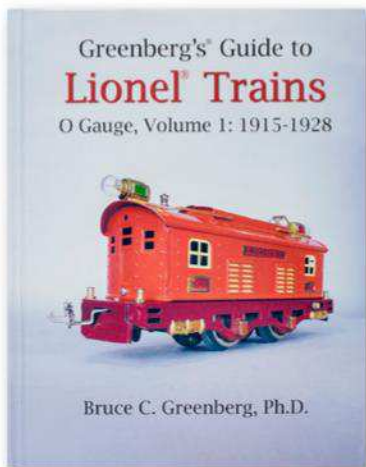
LET'S HAVE A BARN DANCE: The latest Built-&-Ready Structure from Woodland Scenics is the no. BR5865 Old Weathered Barn. The O gauge structure has a fieldstone foundation, shingled roof, hayloft door, and weather vane above the cupola. It also has a concrete grain silo, implement shed, paned windows, and traditional barn doors. The structure is equipped with LED lights and a printed interior. The installed LED lighting was made for use with the Just Plug Lighting System from Woodland Scenics. The structure costs \$169.99. See your hobby retailer or go to www.woodlandscenics.com for more information.



THE SEASON'S REASON:

Monsignor Sherman Council 5103 of the Knights of Columbus (Glendale, N.Y.), is offering a 2018 Keep Christ In Christmas boxcar. The first of a series, the O gauge cars are made in the U.S. by Lionel. The car costs \$85 with shipping included. Preorders placed from outside the U.S. must add \$15 extra for shipping. Car delivery is expected before Christmas. Go to www.glendaleknights.org for additional details and preorder forms. Funds raised from the sale of this car will benefit the Knights of Columbus charities.



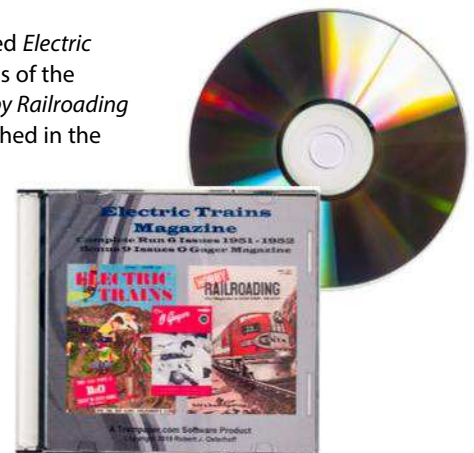


BACK TO SCHOOL: Classes are in session with the latest work by antique train expert Bruce Greenberg. His latest book, *Greenberg's Guide to Lionel Trains O Gauge, Volume 1: 1915-1928*, explores models, production, variations, and package graphics. The hardcover book has more than 400 pages of color images and charts, as well as countless detail shots that illustrate the challenges and variety of collecting trains from this era. The book, which is the first of three to cover Lionel O gauge models in the prewar era, costs \$100 plus \$3.99 shipping. Orders outside the United States add \$45 for international shipping. Order online from Brinkmann Publishing at www.sykesvillehistory.us or by contacting the author by telephone at 703-461-6991 or email at brucecgreenberg1@gmail.com.



GET IT STEAMING: The Railroad Museum of Long Island has launched a campaign to restore Long Island RR no. 39, a Pennsylvania RR class G5a 4-6-0 steam locomotive, to full operating status. As part of the fundraising drive, the group is offering a custom-run "Steam Up! LIRR 39" boxcar. Made in the U.S. by Lionel, the O gauge model features locomotive blueprint-style graphics and both Railroad Museum of Long Island and Strasburg RR logos. Although orders must be received by June 1, 2018, a small number of extra cars will be available for late orders. The car costs \$85, shipping and restricted membership included. Canadian and foreign orders add \$15 extra for shipping. Payment may be made via credit card, check, or money order – payable in U.S. funds. Mail your order to RMLI, P.O. Box 307, Southold, NY 11971-0307. For more information go to www.RMLI.org.

RARE MAGAZINES: Robert Osterhoff has released *Electric Trains Magazine*, a browser-based DVD offering PDFs of the complete runs of *Electric Trains*, *O Gauge*, and *Hobby Railroading* magazines. All three of those titles, originally published in the late 1940s and early 1950s, focused on the toy train hobby. The issues are packed with vintage advertisements and classic postwar trains. The DVD will operate on a Mac or Windows-based computer. An Internet browser is also needed to explore the contents. The DVD costs \$18 plus \$3 shipping. Order from Bob Osterhoff, 1622 Garden Valley Dr., Wildwood, MO 63038. Go to www.trainpaper.com to see his whole line of historic documents.



BRITISH STYLE: Darstaed Trains has released a very limited edition of O gauge tinplate British-outline passenger car sets to pair with British steam power, such as MTH's London Midland & Scottish Ry. (LMS) *Duchess*-class 4-6-2 Pacific (not included). Shown is the British Railways I (ex-LMS period 1) Set A. The cars are of metal construction with die-cast metal sprung trucks and feature British-style link couplers, detailed interiors, and installed lighting. The sets are available in the U.S. through Darstaed's American distributor, www.Eurovintagetrains.com. To learn more about Darstaed's British-outline trains go to www.darstaed.com.

CTT ONLINE

FOR MORE PRODUCT REVIEWS, past and present, check out www.ClassicToyTrains.com

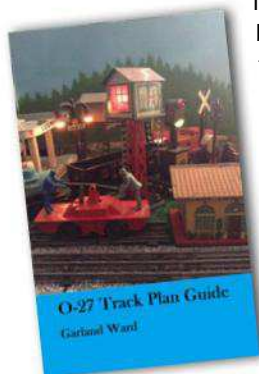
PRODUCT NEWS



EXPAND YOUR MANUFACTURING: Menards will help your Traintown prosper with a new industrial structure: the no. 279-4324 Vetter Sash & Door Co. The four-story structure has rotating fans, 25 windows, a backlit sign, workers, detail pieces, and a weathered exterior. More than 11 inches tall and 6¼ inches wide, the O gauge building has a run-through for trains as well as a small drive-through below the sawdust collector. The Vetter Sash & Door Co. costs \$109.99 plus shipping, or order online at www.menards.com/trains and opt for free shipping to your local Menards store.



IDEAS FOR A TIGHT SPACE: Garland Ward has released a 24-page booklet for anyone interested in starting out with an O-27 layout: *The O-27 Track Plan Guide*. Garland discusses tighter curve planning and operation and offers suggestions on getting the most out of operating in a limited space. The book is available from www.amazon.com for \$9.99 as a Kindle download, or as a paperback book for \$11.99 plus shipping (or free shipping with Amazon Prime).



BICENTENNIAL FLASHBACK: The years surrounding America's bicentennial celebration in 1976 saw an assortment of railroad liveries created to salute the nation's founding. MTH's Premier line no. 20-20904-1 Illinois Central Gulf GP38-2 has a patriotic motif! The O gauge model has two can-style motors, MTH's DCS command and sound system, a smoke unit, and coil couplers. The locomotive costs \$499.95 each. See your MTH retailer or go to www.MTHTrains.com.



MOST MODERN GONDOLA IN S GAUGE: Des Plaines Hobbies/S Scale America is offering a new, fully assembled model of a Thrall no. 2743 gondola in S gauge. The model features 100-ton trucks, wire grab irons, and separately applied grab irons. Five road names are available, and cars come in three road numbers each. The current run includes Canadian Pacific, CRLE (Gondola Connection), CSX, DJLX (David J. Joseph), and DME (Duluth, Minnesota & Eastern). The cars, which are 1:64 scale and come with American Flyer-compatible trucks and couplers, cost \$59.95 each. See your S gauge retailer or order direct from <http://www.desplaineshobbies.com>.

WANT TO SUBMIT A PRODUCT?

Send complete ordering information and a large, hi-res photo file to bkeller@kalmbach.com or on a CD by mail to Bob Keller, Classic Toy Trains magazine, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612.



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11330	Polar RR K-4 w/Legacy	699.95
11367	C.P. #1111 2-Truck Shay w/Legacy	799.95
11379	Pennsy 0-4-0 Switcher Loco	429.99
11385	U.P. 0-4-0 Yard Switcher	429.95
11386	B&M Berkshire w/Legacy	1,139.00
11427	S.P. 0-4-0 Switcher	439.95
11428	Milw 0-4-0 (Conv) Multi Roads Avail	439.95
11446	U.P. 2-8-8-2 Y-3 #3671	1,259.00
28297	S.P. GP-9 Diesel w/Legacy	379.95
28311	U.P. DD35 #70 Diesel w/Leg (2 #s)	599.95
28312	B.N. SD60 #8301 w/Legacy	479.95
28363	B.N. SD60 #8302 w/Legacy	479.95
28383	Conrail Genset w/Legacy	769.95
28384	C.N. Genset Switcher w/Legacy	769.95
29366	S.P. Tank Train Oil Can Set	699.95
30145	Candian Maple Leaf Frt Set	499.95
316010	Railbox 50' Modern Boxcar 6pk	279.00
316020	BNSF 50' Modern Box Car 6pk	279.00
316050	ATSF 3-Bay Hopper 6pm	259.00
31774	AEC Radioactive Transport Set	239.95
31778	#1484WS Hudson Pass Set	449.00
31783	BNSF Ice Cold Express Set	895.00
34625	N.P. F3 AA Frt Set Inquire "B" Units	679.95
34737	N.P. GP-9 (Multi Roads Avail)	449.95
34738	N.P. GP-9 #317 w/Legacy	449.95
37821	Smoke Fluid Loader	219.95
38354	#1464 U.P. Anniv. Pass Alco Set	429.95
38310	#2185W NYC F3 AA Freight Set	449.00
38311	#2276W Budd RDC Set	369.00
38312	#2343 SF F3 AA	399.99
38313	B&O Budd RDC P&D	269.00
38324	#2507W N/H F-3 Freight w/5 Cars	429.00
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38420	U.P. U30C #2897 w/Legacy	499.00
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38422	N.P. U33C #3307 w/Legacy	499.00
38738	BNSF Frisco Heritage SD70ACe	499.95
38742	BNSF B.N. #1975 SD70ACe	499.95
38743	BNSF B.N. #1980 SD70ACe Dummy	259.95
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38784	C.N. #4000 GP-35	479.95
38855	G.N. GP-35 #2519	479.95
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82806	U.P. FEF #844 Black	1,599.99
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83193	S.P. Lines #4449 GS-4 w/Legacy	1,649.95
83197	AM Freedom Train #4449 GS-4	1,649.95
83371	G.N. SD-45 #400 Hustle Muscle	599.95
83380	U.P. SD-45 #1	599.95
83386	Milw NNW-2 w/Legacy	479.99
84072	Everett Mogul #11	619.95
84096	BNSF SD-70ACe	569.00
84104	MRL SD-70ACe	569.00
84108	G.N. GP-7 LC+	299.00
84248	S.P. AC-9 #3800	1,899.99
84250	S.P. Daylight AC-9 #3811	1,899.99
84251	S.F. LC+ Berkshire w/BT (More Roads)	429.99
11319S	Pennsy K-4 Red Arrow w/4 Pass Cars	1,399.95

16211	S.P. 4-8-4 GS-4 w/PS 3	449.95
16451	Erie 2-8-8-2 Triplex w/PS 3.0	629.00
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16671	G.N. 2-8-8-2 Loco w/PS 3.0	629.00
25581	U.P. Dash-9 Diesel w/PS 2.0	369.00
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31681	UP 4-6-6-4 Challenger w/PS 2	1,395.00
34831	S.P. 4-8-4 GS-4 w/PS 3.0 #4449	1,049.95
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29901RK	MRL SD70ACe w/PS 2	299.95

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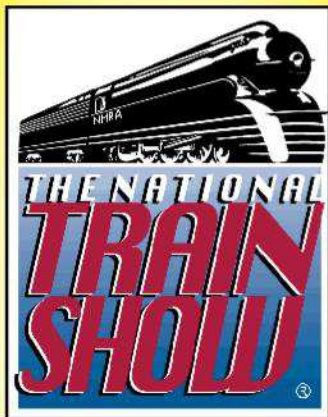
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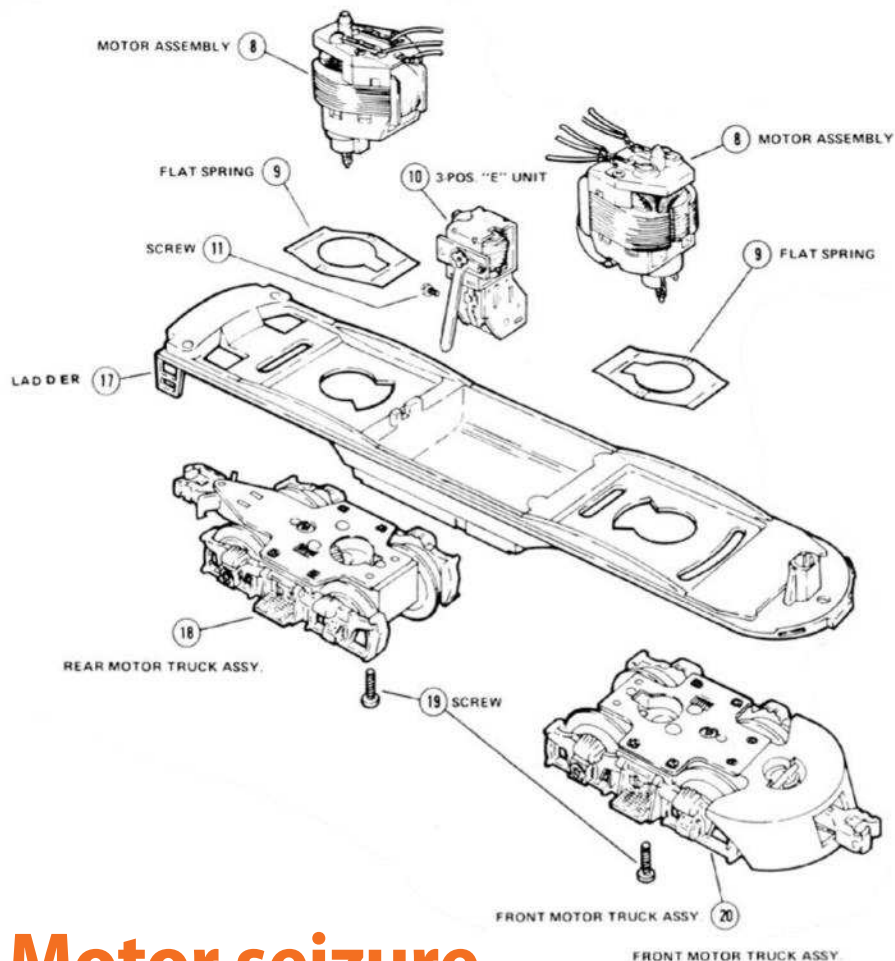
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QUESTIONS • ANSWERS

WITH JOSEPH L. MANIA AND THE CTT STAFF



Motor seizure

NEEDS A CLEANING OR IS IT SOMETHING MORE?

LIONEL F3 SEIZURES

Q I have a Lionel modern-era no. 8952 Pennsylvania RR F3 diesel that has begun to seize up. It has been properly lubed, and all gearing seems intact and meshes correctly. I have isolated a squeal in one of the two motors similar to the squeak a dry armature shaft makes in a horizontally mounted motor. Could this be a thrust-bearing failure? Will that cause the mechanism to seize? Is this a problem found on late-1970s locomotives? – Evan Kouril, Hahira, Ga.

A While the problem you describe may be a failure, it is probably just hardened grease and oil in the armature bearings. To properly remedy this (and to check that there is no damage), first remove the armature and the bearings, along with the thrust washers. Then clean out the old lubricating products, examine the bearings, and apply new

grease. Obviously, if the bearing rings, thrust washers, or bearings (pressed into the field) show signs of wear, they should be replaced.

Disassembly is straightforward. The brushplate and brushes come off with only two screws. Just above the worm gear on the bottom of the armature is a small E clip. It snaps off, and the armature is pulled

out from the top. Take note of the location of the washers. There should be a “sandwich” of a thrust washer, bearing ring, and thrust washer on both sides of the field casting.

These are sturdily constructed motors and rarely require extensive work to get back into good working order. Typically a thorough cleaning is all that is required.

WHICH CONTROLLER?

Q I have a Lionel no. 445 operating switch tower and am having problems with the wiring. Is it better to use a no. 145C or 153C contactor? – Harvey Dodson, St. Louis, Mo.

A Either contactor will work. The 145C has only two clips to attach wires to. The 153C has three. When using the 153C, clips 2 and 3 are the normally open pair; they close to complete a circuit under the weight of the train. In this way 153C acts the same as the 145C.

There are three clips under the switch tower. Clip 1 goes to the hot, or center rail. Clip 3 goes to the ground, or outside rail. Clip 2 will go to clip 1 on the 145C or clip 2 on the 153C. The other clip of the 145C or clip 3 on the 153C will go to the ground or outside rail.

This way the light is always on in the building, but the coil is activated only when the train closes the contactor.

LAMP REPLACEMENT

Q I have several Lionel no. 58 lamp-posts, and one of them has a split lampshade. I have extra shades, but don't know how to remove the bad one and install a new one. I see the socket and wire are involved, but I don't know how to remove them without damaging them. What do you advise? – Clifford Reeves, Fairview Park, Ohio

A The shade is soldered to the brass tube, and the lamp socket is soldered inside the shade. The socket has to come off with the shade. You will certainly damage the paint while unsoldering and re-soldering the shade. Care must be taken so as not to heat anything up too much and melt the filigree.

The most difficult part will be snaking a new wire from the lamp contact all the way through the tube and out the bottom of the base. **CTT**

HAVE A QUESTION?

Write to "Questions & Answers" at Classic Toy Trains, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612, or email us at qsandas@ClassicToyTrains.com and put the words "questions & answers" in the subject line.



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Set courtesy Charles Mozingo

AUBURN RUBBER CO.'S NO. 965 SET

To understand how toy manufacturers sought after World War II to capitalize on the popularity of railroads and the wish kids had to play with a train, we must look beyond electric models. Many families lacked the income needed to buy even an inexpensive Marx set. Also, some parents disliked electric trains, believing it better to find a set that seemed safer, quieter, or cleaner.

Locomotives and rolling stock made of wood, rubber, cardstock, or vinyl answered the needs of such households. They didn't run on track and lacked any sort of motor, electric or windup. Kids just pushed or pulled the train across the floor.

Auburn has an idea

If your family was among those in search of a simple little train unlikely to damage furniture or scratch even the youngest child, it probably was familiar with models by Auburn Rubber Co. From the late 1940s until the early 1960s, that firm in Auburn, Ind., marketed colorful and safe toys molded out of vinyl.

A prime example of what Auburn produced was the popular no.

965 seven-piece set.

It included a combination steam engine and tender, two freight cars, a caboose, and three railroad laborers. Everything came packaged in a sturdy cardboard flip-open box imprinted with graphics of activities at an urban station.

Approximate value for like-new set with original box: \$100

THE SEVEN-PIECE SET

- No. 525 gray-and-black steam engine and tender
10¼ inches long
- Yellow "Auburn" gondola
7 inches long
- Blue "Auburn" hopper
7½ inches long
- Red "Auburn" caboose
6½ inches long
- Three white railroad laborers

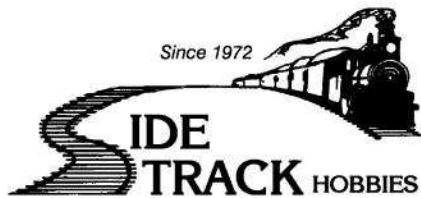
could connect them and pull the whole train at once.

Innovative company

Finding an inexpensive way to manufacture and market safe, durable toys had been a hallmark of Auburn Rubber Co. since 1935. A vast variety of sturdy human and animal figures had led the way, followed by automobiles and trucks, tractors and farm implements, ships and airplanes, and soldiers and tanks.

The business had been established to use rubber in more conventional ways, namely, the production of automobile tires. A.L. Murry had launched what he called Double Fabric Tire Co. in 1913 to supply tires to another firm in his Indiana town, Auburn Automobile Co. During the 1920s, he changed the name of his business and eventually shifted to making rubber soles for shoes.

Declining orders during the Great Depression motivated the powers-that-be at Auburn Rubber to investigate the toy field. Profits quickly soared. The firm abandoned playthings for soles nailed to combat boots during and after World War II, not returning to toys until 1952. Among the most popular of the vinyl items shown in the Auburn catalogs of the 1950s was the 965 set. — Roger Carp



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37197	NORTH POLE CENTRAL GIRDER BRIDGE	MSRP 29.99 L16RTR	\$22.00
37816	ROCKVILLE BRIDGE	MSRP 699.99 L12V2	\$469.00
37821	SMOKE FLUID LOADER - COMMAND CONTROLLED -	MSRP 249.99 L11V2	\$179.00
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37834	LIONEL BOAT (4PK)	MSRP 24.99 L16RTR	\$20.00
37842	CANADIAN NATIONAL PIGGYBACK TRAILER	MSRP 89.99 L15V1	\$67.00
37852	CHRISTMAS PEOPLE PACK	MSRP 24.99 L16RTR	\$16.00
37855	LIONEL AIRPLANE (2PK)	MSRP 36.99	\$27.00

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6-82011	KEYSTONE CAFE	MSRP 79.99 L15RTR	\$60.00
6-82012	SINGLE FLOODLIGHT TOWER	MSRP 74.99 L16V1	\$56.00
6-82013	DOUBLE FLOODLIGHT TOWER	MSRP 89.99 L15RTR	\$65.00
6-82014	#192 CONTROL TOWER	MSRP 99.99 L15V1	\$80.00
6-82016	OIL PUMP	MSRP 59.99 L15RTR	\$44.00
6-82103	PLAYGROUND SWINGS	MSRP 74.99 L15RTR	\$56.00
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83171	MOW WORKERS FIGURE PACK	MSRP 29.99 L16RTR 12/16	\$23.00
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FROM THE UNDERGROUND

WITH LOU PALUMBO

Back in The Day

MEMORIES OF GROWING UP IN THE POSTWAR ERA

It's finally here! My second book is ready and available at my toy train store. The title of the book is, *Back in The Day – Growing Up in the 1950s: I Still Haven't Met a Train I Didn't Like*.

Besides the past four years of my "Views From The Underground" from *Classic Toy Trains*, there are 49 all-new stories about growing up in the 1950s as experienced by yours truly. I hope the stories will carry you back to that time when many of us were young. Here's an excerpt from *Back in The Day*, recalling the parades that took place in my hometown's modest downtown district:

Folks in New Castle, Pa., referred to the business district as "downtown." In truth, it amounted to five or six blocks of buildings along our main thoroughfare. All the parades were held there, with people marching down Washington Street. Sometimes thousands of people lined both sides of the street to watch the parade.

Parades were held on all holidays, starting with Memorial Day at the end of May. Fourth of July, Halloween, and Armistice Day in November were the other major dates when parades were organized.

People loved a parade. The annual Christmas parade kicked off the holiday season in our town, a time that was so special there. Downtown stores always extended their evening hours to accommodate the increased shopping.

What I remember best is the wonderful Christmas displays stores placed in their windows facing the streets to show their wares. My family loved to window-shop at Christmas time. The hustle and bustle surpassed what went on at any other time. People were friendly, and the crowded sidewalks gave you a good feeling on those cold nights.

My parents, siblings, and I looked at all the department store windows. You can guess which displays I liked the best. Yep, the ones that had all the new toys and the electric trains running.

The nights we spent downtown before Christmas concluded with a hot dog or hamburger and a hot chocolate at one of the little diners located there.

I loved the downtown area during the 1950s, but I regret to say the stores are gone now. Fancy malls replaced those downtown stores, starting in the 1960s.

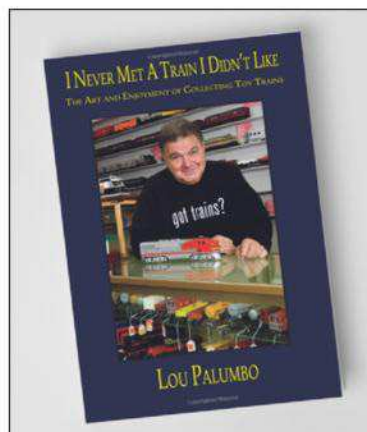
Automobiles and working housewives were the reasons malls were developed. People needed more time to shop at night and on weekends. Malls provided the parking and stores that led to the demise of the downtown areas.

You can buy copies of my new book as well as my first one (shown at the left) for \$12.99 each. To order, just send me an email or call my store, The Underground Railroad Shoppe at 724-652-4912. I'll sign copies on request.

You'll also be able to pick up a signed copy of either book at the semiannual train shows organized by the Eastern Division of the Train Collectors Association in York, Pa.

Better yet, stop by the Underground Railroad Shoppe in New Castle, Pa. and get a book personally signed while visiting with me at the store. I recommend calling before you visit because our off-season hours can vary, and we'd hate to miss you. Until then...

Keep searchin' **CTT**



LOU PALUMBO, owner of the Underground Railroad Shoppe in New Castle, Pa., writes this exclusive column for CTT. He can be reached at 1906 Wilmington Rd., New Castle, PA 16105 or email at trainplum@yahoo.com

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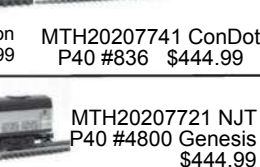
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The JOY of billb

By Roger Carp • Photos by William Zuback

Throughout the post-World War II period and ever since, layout builders have used miniature billboards to add realism while providing viewers with doses of visual enjoyment and hints of nostalgia. Outdoor advertising consistently improves O and S gauge rural and urban scenes, regardless of whether it involves plain yet colorful images or animated signage.

Lionel launched a trend in layout development that really took off during the 1950s and has never lost speed. The firm's chief rivals, American Flyer and Marx, joined in with billboards of their own. Then in the modern

era of production, some more elaborate models made their debut, leading to the illuminated animation of today.

FROM STANDARD GAUGE TO S

The ongoing history of toy train billboards, which marched steadily throughout

the postwar period, started at a crawl over the winter of 1932-33. Lionel announced a couple of sets of four signs, each available at no charge to anyone enrolling in its Lionel Engineers Club. All that was required was mailing 50 cents to Lionel.

Successful or otherwise, the

promotional campaign failed to spark ongoing sets. Never again did Lionel issue Standard gauge billboards. Neither did it offer any miniature outdoor advertising for O gauge enthusiasts during prewar years.

Instead, Lionel left the American Flyer Manufacturing Co. to pick up the baton in 1937, albeit in a very different manner. Design engineers housed the firm's whistle mechanism inside a sheet-metal structure they called a billboard. The no. 2029 accessory had artwork depicting a New York Central Hudson.

oardards



No billboard sets for toy train enthusiasts have surpassed the Lionel no. 310 in popularity. Builders of O and S gauge layouts have been making good use of them since the 1950s.



The A.C. Gilbert Co. created colorful billboards like this one to promote its product line. They served as the decorative elements added to operating whistling and horn devices.

MINIATURE ADS BRING REALISM, COLOR, AND LOTS OF NOSTALGIA

The A.C. Gilbert Co., which bought the assets and inventory of American Flyer in 1938, followed with its own whistling billboard. Item no. 577 showed first a Royal portable typewriter and then in 1939 a clown from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. The latter image returned after World War II.

LIONEL HITS BACK WITH THE 310 SET

The 577 whistling billboard was more a remote-controlled accessory than a replica of the kind of billboard motorists saw

alongside rural highways or city dwellers spied on rooftops. So even though Gilbert continued to catalog versions with different artwork into the 1950s, Lionel was the leader with billboards.

A mail-in offer advertised in 1949 promised a cardboard sheet with eight signs. It was the brainchild of Advertising Manager Joseph Hanson, who likely had been behind the Standard gauge billboards Lionel had given as premiums.

A year later, the company began cataloging sheets of eight billboards with five green

plastic frames as the no. 310 set. Purchasers separated the signs along their perforations, inserted one into a frame, and situated it alongside the tracks.

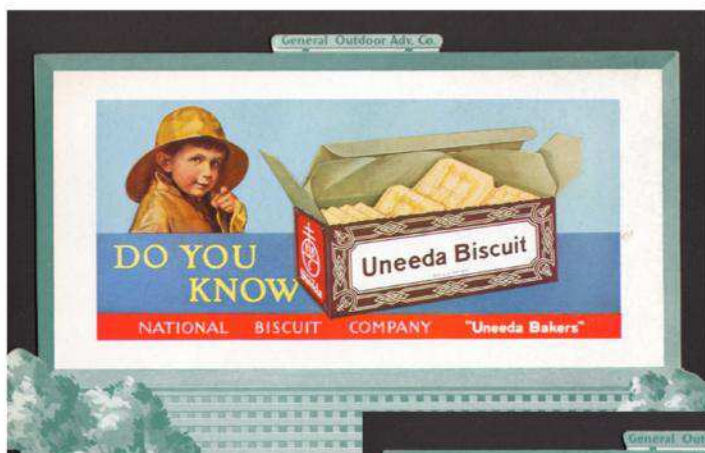
The billboards, which generally changed in appearance if not subject each year, presented mainstream consumer products rather than toys or fictitious items. Ford automobiles, Frigidaire appliances, Breck shampoos, Sunoco gasoline, and Zerex Anti-Freeze from DuPont were among the brands represented.

Billboards earned cash for Lionel. However, revenue

came, not from the businesses advertising their wares (Hanson would not have had time to negotiate with them), but from Standard Outdoor Advertising Inc. That firm erected actual billboards and so could make miniatures. Standard put its name on each Lionel billboard.

Jacques Zuccaire, who succeeded Hanson as advertising manager in 1955, adopted a different approach to the billboards. His new strategy became evident in 1957.

Instead of working through Standard, Zuccaire hammered



Lionel began to use miniature outdoor advertising in 1932-33, when it released Standard gauge billboards such as these two. Images courtesy Robert Osterhoff



out deals with clients and then had Lionel design the billboards. In addition, signs in the 310 sets publicized Lionel's trains and its Airex brand of fishing equipment.

The cavalcade of billboards kept marching on. The five signs changed regularly between 1957 and '61. Then

Lionel went to only three in 1962 before returning to the five from 1961 in 1964 and '65. Five new ones appeared in 1966, and they stayed in the catalog through 1968. A 310 set was not cataloged in 1969, the end of the postwar era.

The only enhancement available from Lionel arrived in 1956. Designers cleverly attached a light over a frame that brightened and dimmed automatically. The no. 410 blinking billboard remained in the line as a low-end accessory through 1958.

Louis Marx & Co. had already tried something similar. Its no. 0226 lighted billboard, first released in 1953, included a bulb wired to shine directly behind the cardboard illustration for a variety of household wares. As for Flyer, the best it did was to distribute a pair of cardboard billboards with frames in 1958.

BILLBOARDS GO HIGH-TECH

The operating billboards Lionel and K-Line introduced in the 1990s and early 2000s hardly represent the most advanced and exciting billboards on the market. Turn, instead, to Miller Engineering (www.microstru.com), a small firm in New Canaan, Conn., that has revolutionized the hobby. Miller has changed the look of O and S gauge layouts with animated signs featuring chase lighting and specialty flash patterns, all relying on a process known as electroluminescence.

The process uses electrical current fed through a phosphor (a synthetic coating) as a means of creating non-thermal light. The same technology illuminates automobile instrument panels and the panels of medical equipment, along with electroluminescent billboards.

This technology gives modelers the ability to add flashing signs that point to a hotel, announce

the location of the nearest Railway Express office or Rexall drugstore, or even place the swirling red and white of a barber pole on a building near the depot.

The animated billboard Miller made for *Classic Toy Trains* (kalmbachhobbystore.com/Billboard) flashes a message and has an arrow to direct attention to the sign.

Miller Engineering has transformed the hobby with its sophisticated animated billboards, including this one promoting *Classic Toy Trains*.



Many Miller signs can be installed on the roof of a structure. Cut a hole in the roof and slip through the sign's plug. Secure the sign with glue or epoxy. Feed the connection for the AAA battery pack through the base of the structure and connect it. Miller also sells a converter module that makes it possible to let your sign run with power from a transformer.

While you can make a frame or support for your Miller signs, they can be used with a support framework supplied by Miller to simulate a traditional billboard on your home layout. — Bob Keller

MODERN REVIVAL

The modern era of Lionel production opened in 1970, with enthusiasts rejoicing because billboards were back. The no. 2710 set offered five signs and five plastic frames. Over the succeeding 14 years, the assortment of products advertised ranged widely. Spark plugs and U.S. savings bonds, Cheerios and Parker Brothers board games, Sheraton hotels, and Lionel trains were promoted.

A change in the ownership of Lionel from General Mills to Richard P. Kughn interrupted the flow of billboard sets. The 2710 finished its run in 1984, and it was not until 1987 that the popular accessory returned with the no. 12707 set. Three newly designed white plastic frames enabled purchasers to pop in the double-sided artwork endorsing savings bonds, reading of books, and wearing seat belts while in a car.



Something new and appealing arrived in 1990. Lionel Trains Inc. hit the market with an animated billboard. The two advertisements changed every few seconds.



HINTS OF ANIMATION

In the meantime, Lionel Trains Inc. launched a new chapter in the history of toy train billboards in 1990, when the no. 12761 animated billboard entered the line. The colorful operating accessory featured messages and art printed on rows of slats. Unlike full-size animated billboards that changed by rotating slats, the 12761 used a thermostati-

cally operated mechanism to slide its various slats.

Cataloged again in 1991, the 12761 gave way to the virtually identical no. 12809 animated billboard for the next two years. Railroad safety and the benefits of drinking milk were the themes of the alternating billboards. Then the individuals in charge at LTI decided to bring back the 12761 for 1993 and '95.

STILL FLIPPING

Lionel's catalogs overflow with traditional and animated billboards these days. The company promotes its own products, holiday characters and imagery, and so much more on vividly illustrated signs. Operating designs still boast slats that shift position. Newer ones borrow a K-Line design to show tiny laborers unrolling the sheets and gluing

them in place on a simulated wood framework.

The wonderful tradition dating from a few Standard gauge billboards in the early 1930s picked up momentum at Lionel and its competitors in the 1950s. It remains a vibrant part of the toy train hobby, with upstart businesses taking the lead and presenting hobbyists with exciting and nostalgic signs to collect and use. **CTT**



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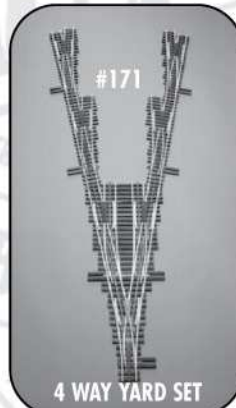
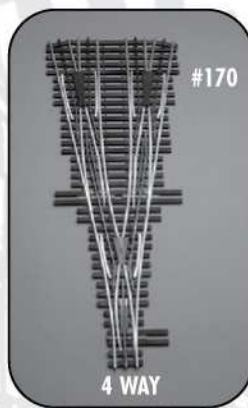
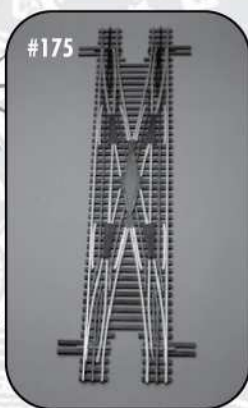
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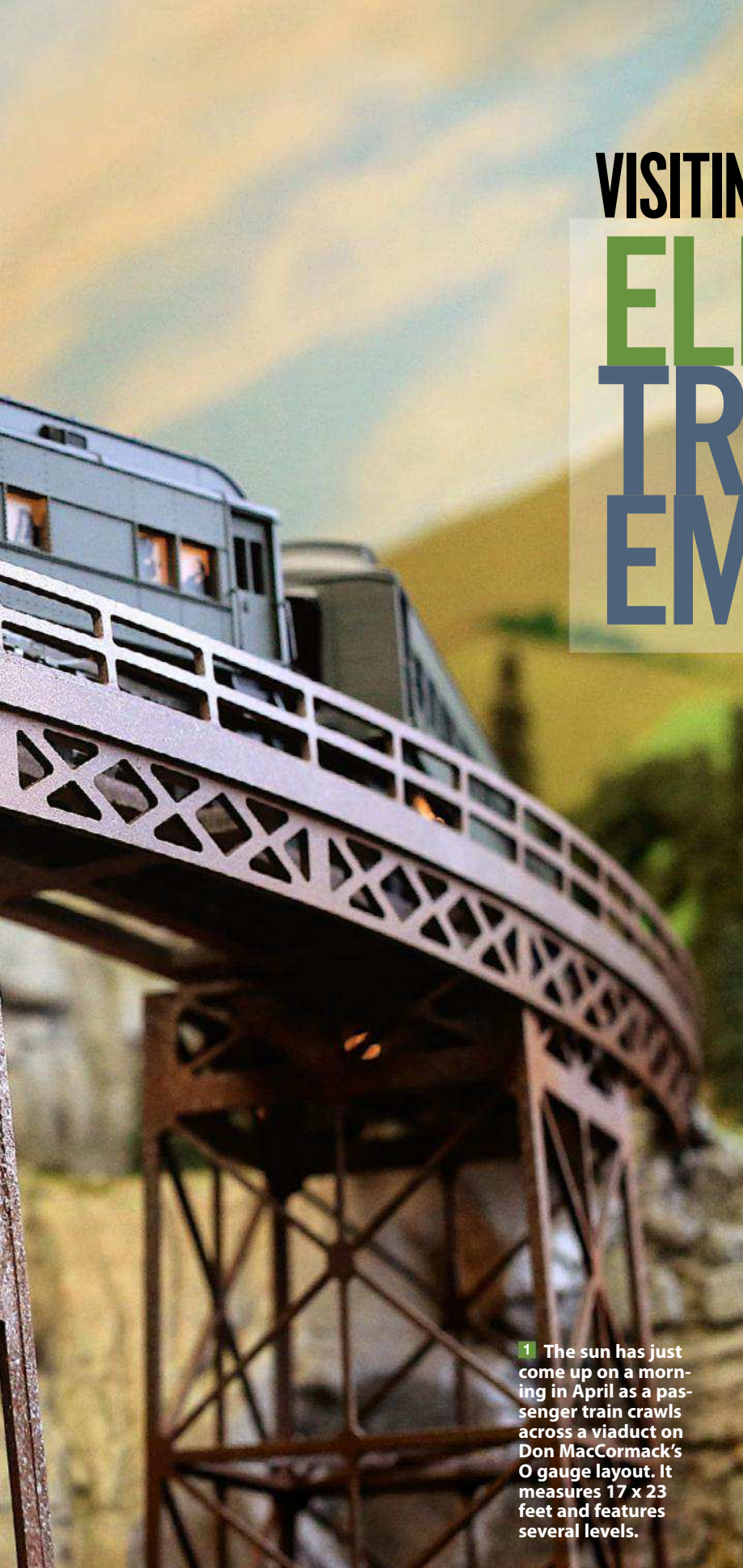
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VISITING DON'S ELECTRIC TRAIN EMPORIUM

By Roger Carp

Photos by Don MacCormack

Pull open the door and walk inside Don's Electric Train Emporium. Impressive sights await, from the warm lighting to the modern shelving on the walls. O gauge enthusiast Don MacCormack has created an environment for his trains any reader of *Classic Toy Trains* might envy.

The centerpiece of the room, much as would have been true in any retail establishment selling electric trains back in postwar days, is a landscaped layout measuring 17 x 23 feet. The variety of trains Don operates only adds to the fun. Nobody wants to leave!

What spreads out before you captures the excitement of what's happening in the toy train hobby these days. Track and switches; conventional and command control systems and associated hardware; realistic scenery; illuminated structures; and finely designed details – everything attests to the wonders now available.

PREPARING THE FOUNDATION

Any builder will tell you the importance of a good foundation. It was a detail Don didn't neglect as he planned the new layout early in 2011 (work was finished three years later, with help from TW TrainWorx). Don built the benchwork from a grid of 1 x 3 finger-jointed white pine. Listening to him rhapsodize about it you may imagine you're hearing a young

YOU'LL
HAVE
A BLAST
MEETING
DON
AND HIS
LAYOUT

1 The sun has just come up on a morning in April as a passenger train crawls across a viaduct on Don MacCormack's O gauge layout. It measures 17 x 23 feet and features several levels.



2 Different levels of three-rail track from Lionel provide ample areas to photograph on the almost 400-square-foot O gauge railroad Don finished. While you're admiring the painted sky and clouds, check out the line he installed right below the ceiling.

father listing the accomplishments of his child in nursery school.

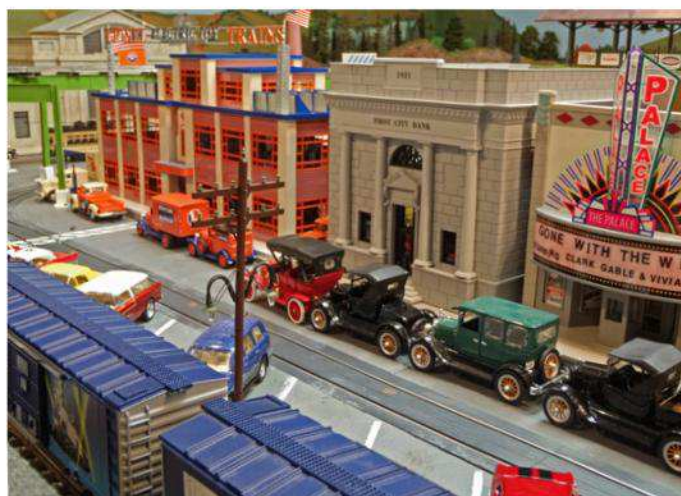
Over the benchwork Don secured ½-inch-thick cabinet-grade plywood, followed by 1-inch Styrofoam insulation board. Careful construction and quality materials guaranteed a solid tabletop.

Foam rubber served as the roadbed for the main lines and spurs. The thickness of that material ranged from ⅛ inch all the way up to ¾ inches.

Selecting the track caused a dilemma for Don. He owned a lot of Lionel O gauge curves and straights (traditional tubular and FasTrack). Incorporating those sections made sense, if only because doing so would decrease the expense.

Realism won in the end. Don bought more track as well as turnouts from Ross Custom Switches. Ross products, Don

says, work very well for the main lines (32 to 36 inches high from the floor). Lionel FasTrack handled the subway. Don used Lionel tubular sections on the elevated loops (44, 52, and 60 inches high).



3 Everybody wants to see the latest feature at the Palace. Idle boxcars wait for an engineer to finish watching *Gone With the Wind* and shunt them to the local rail yard.

AT A GLANCE

Name: Don's Electric Train Emporium

Dimensions: 17 x 23 feet

Track and switches: Lionel, Ross Custom Switches (diameters go from 27 to 72 inches)

Motive power: Atlas O, K-Line, Lionel, MTH

Rolling stock: Bachmann, Atlas O, Lionel, Marx, MTH, Williams

Controls: Lionel CW-80 (6), ZW (1), and ZW-L (2) transformers with Lionel Legacy and MTH Digital Command System

Accessories: American Flyer, Bachmann, K-Line, Lionel, Miller Engineering, MTH, Walthers, Z-Stuff for Trains

Structures: Department 56, K-Line, Lionel, MTH, Plasticville, scratchbuilt, Woodland Scenics

Vehicles: Eastwood, K-Line, Kinsmart, Lionel

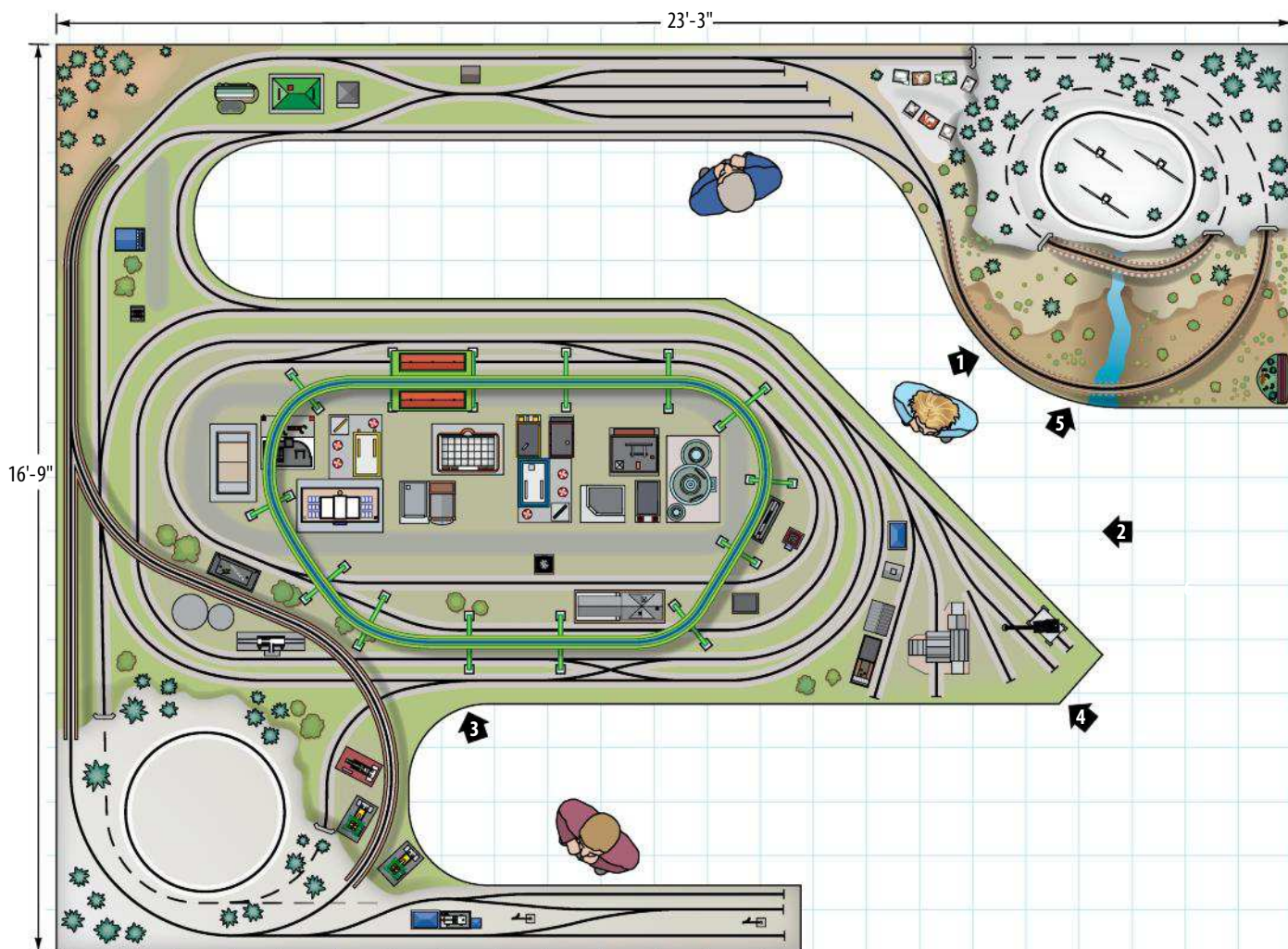
Figures: MTH, Woodland Scenics

A LONG JOURNEY HOME

Constructing a sturdy and level platform was only the beginning of the project. Don shared his ideas and wishes with Roger and Dorcie Farkash at TW Train-Worx, and they planned the steps that would result in this E-shaped layout.

Think of Don's Electric Train Emporium as the end of an odyssey launched more than half a century earlier on Christmas morning 1948. Don received a Lionel O-27 steam freight outfit. Based on his description of the contents, it was a no. 1411W, a four-car train led by a no. 1666 engine.

The next stop on Don's hobby journey arrived two years later. Assisted by his father, the 9-year-old boy built a 3 x 6-foot three-rail layout using scrap lumber. Multiplying the fun were accessories,



Whimsical scenes as well as realistic landscaping and eye-catching structures distinguish different segments of the 17 x 23-foot O gauge model railroad highlighting Don's Electric Train Emporium. The numbered arrows correspond to the numbers in each of the captioned photographs taken for *Classic Toy Trains* by Don MacCormack, its proprietor and builder.

including a tunnel and Lionel rotary beacon, trestle bridge, and automatic gateman.

Gradually, however, Don handed over control of the family's miniature rail system to his brother. Out of sight left everything out of mind. Or so the trains and accessories remained until the day sometime in the middle 1970s when the dusty yet still compelling Lionel models went back home to Don and his wife, Junie.

For what? Well, Don says a bit sheepishly, only for the small layouts he put together beneath the branches of the family Christmas tree to amuse his children. Since he did so for only two seasons, Don dismisses the notion that he had somehow inaugurated a cherished tradition: "The antique trains spent most of the time packed away in boxes," he admits.



FRONT AND CENTER

Don never meant to wait until he was on the verge of retirement to get the layout finished. "Life," he says, "just got in the way of the trains!"

What changed for Don and Junie and their six adult sons and daughters was the arrival

of grandchildren. An elaborate setup at Christmas featuring O gauge as well as Large scale trains and structures thrilled everyone.

Except that Don felt a hint of sadness when he surveyed the temporary display that would be put away after the holidays. More and more, he wanted a permanent model railroad on which to refine his building skills and operate the new locomotives and cars he had bought.

Junie loved the idea of her husband planning a landscaped operating layout in the 20 x 30-foot room partitioned off from the rest of the storage building adjacent to their home. It was, she pointed out, air-conditioned and well illuminated.

With nothing hindering him, Don moved ahead at a smooth pace. He consulted with experienced modelers, notably

Things are usually bustling on the layout at Don's Electric Train Emporium, but never more than at Christmas. Junie takes part in the festivities with her husband.

Roger, the guru behind the reproductions of Lionel displays sold by TW TrainWorx.

Scenery seemed most daunting to Don, in particular, the mountain range he wanted to stand as the defining feature of



his railroad. He read articles in CTT about how to build realistic hills and other landforms. He even went so far as to enroll in a class offered by Roger intended to teach landscaping to novices.

FINALLY CONFIDENT

Most of you reading this article can identify with Don when it comes to a dearth of confidence when making scenery. Assembling benchwork and screwing down track – pieces of cake! But the thought of making a mountain, a pond, or a forest is a different story. Better to quit before even ruining the tabletop.

Don disagrees. “Once I felt this way and would have shied away from daring to try scenery,” he says. “My attitude has changed, thanks to all that I have learned. Now I look forward to building a mountain or a field. It’s just fun!”

What are the secrets to Don’s success?

Don started with a foundation of plywood and polyurethane foam. Layers of

FlexCoat, a water-based coating used for various types of foam made and sold by Rosco Laboratories, went on next. Once they had dried thoroughly to form a solid outer shell, it was time to brush on shades of household latex paint.

The process went forward as Don added more colors with acrylics and enamels. When satisfied with the appearance, he spread on an assortment of ground covers. They ranged from ballast to textured foam to colored turf and flocking. Whatever Don liked from Noch, Scenic Express, and Woodland Scenics went on. No reason to stop until he saw the look he had envisioned.

The most challenging part for Don was sculpting the two 60-inch-high mountains. Days of work and a few tips from Roger enabled him to do it.

Finishing touches for the mountain and other features were bushes and trees by Creative Accents, Grand Central Gems, JTT, and Woodland Scenics. In the spots

where Don believed small bodies of water would look appropriate, he used clear gel medium and clear silicone, all available from commercial sources.

ROADS AND STRUCTURES

All roads may not lead directly to Don’s Electric Train Emporium. Once there, however, visitors discover all roads on the layout lead to one of the cities.

If you have mastered the arts involved with making realistic scenery, you find, as Don did, that modeling streets and highways is straightforward. He formed the various roadways by “sculpting” (to borrow from Don’s terminology) the Styrofoam or Sculptamold underneath. Then he sealed the surface with a flat shade of FlexCoat. Realistic colors, ranging from gray to black, finished the roads.

Don’s approach to adding structures contained surprises. Typically, the highways lead to residential, industrial, and railroad-oriented buildings from widely

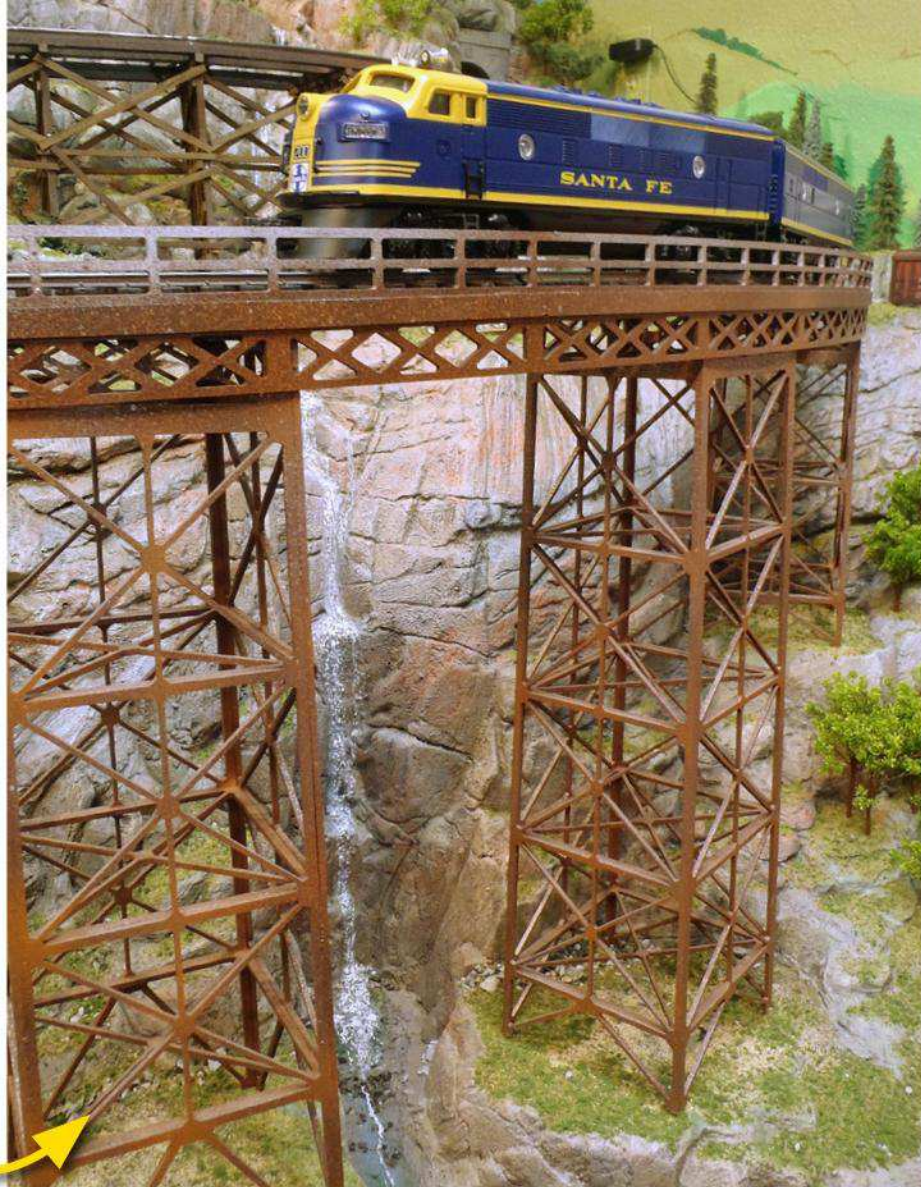


CTT ONLINE

TO WATCH VIDEO of Don MacCormack's O gauge layout, please go to www.ClassicToyTrains.com/LayoutVisits

4 Accessories from the contemporary Lionel line, notably the nos. 37935 track gang and 34144 Santa Fe scrap yard, blend with the new portal gantry crane.

5 Experience has taught the engineer driving the Santa Fe freight how important it is to brake gently when crossing the viaduct. Even so, he is more than aware that his schedule dictates making up a little time once he's on safer ground.



known manufacturers. Picking out the selections from Bachmann, K-Line, Department 56, MTH Electric Trains, Lionel, and Wm. K. Walther's is easy.

Elsewhere, knowledgeable modelers will point their fingers at operating signs produced by Miller Engineering and finished craftsman structures from Woodland Scenics. Everything boasts lights, light weathering, and details galore.

Still, in spite of the wide array of commercial kits and ready-to-install buildings currently on the market, Don occasionally departed from that obvious path. "Some of the finest structures you can see," he explained, "are custom models designed and then fashioned out of laser-cut materials by members of the crew at TW Train-Worx. They also add plenty of landscaping and other details."

Taken together, the disparate structures leave the impression of a realistic world, one that viewers can feel free to study in depth. All they have to do is walk right up

to the assorted vignettes and investigating the myriad buildings, vehicles, figures, and details thoughtfully added to each of them. Don wanted every scene to be accessible, with trains running right through them.

DELIGHTFUL DOZEN

Proprietors of stores selling electric trains have always needed to showcase virtually every one of their products to boost sales and attract attention.

The same philosophy governs Don's Electric Train Emporium. Not that Don has selling trains in mind. Instead, he aims to display what he owns to their best advantage on his sprawling O gauge model railroad.

"Did you notice there are 12 independent loops of track?" Don asks. As a consequence of his planning, a dozen trains and subways can operate at once.

With the flick of a switch or two at the control panel, Don powers up the bank of nine transformers (headed by one Lionel type-ZW and two type-ZW-Ls) and gets in motion a Christmas express or a Halloween special, not to mention plenty of ordinary freight and passenger trains. This is one magnificent spectacle.

Enjoy your invitation to Don's memorable train room. Take in the array of trains and structures. Gather tips from the

In the spots where Don believed small bodies of water would look appropriate, he used clear gel medium and clear silicone, all available from commercial sources.

scenic effects, which span the gamut from waterfalls to forests. You'll treasure your time there, feeling as though you have traveled back decades to the days when train stores were local hotspots. **CTT**

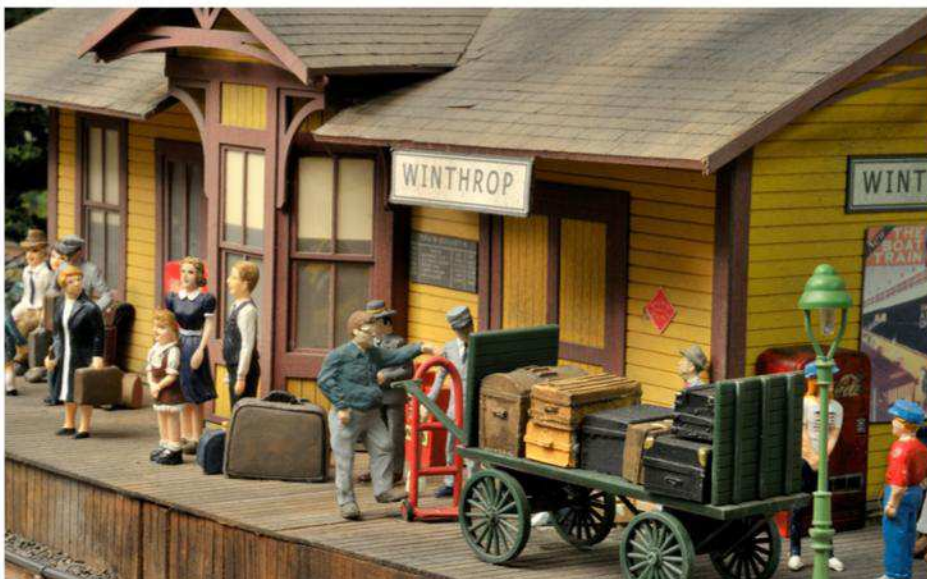


1 When the Train of Tomorrow (built by General Motors and Pullman-Standard to promote rail travel on dome cars) toured the U.S. in 1947-49, it spent time in New England. Carl used a 3rd Rail set to model the event on his 22 x 32½-foot O gauge model railroad.



CARL CHANCEY WAITED
HALF A CENTURY FOR THE
PERFECT LAYOUT

BUILDING the DREAM



By Roger Carp • Photos by Stan Trzoniec

More than most O gauge operators, Carl Chancey understands how Lionel trains fired the imaginations of youngsters during the postwar years. He corrects the common notion that the catalogs the toy train maker released each year amounted to “wish books.” Those full-color listings of the outfits offered for sale should be considered “dream books.” For what they depicted could only be dreamed of by kids who, like Carl, had little chance of getting those great sets.

But a boy can dream. Carl imagined owning the steam and diesel engines shown pulling realistic freight and passenger cars. And he never gave up hope. The 22 x 32½-foot three-rail display presented in these pages is really the fulfillment of dreams nurtured since the 1950s.

AN IMPOSSIBILITY

What’s promoted as an “attitude of gratitude” explains the many wonders of his marriage to Merry, whom Carl prizes. They’ve been together almost half a century, and she is, Carl said, “a partner in all the decisions guiding their lives.”

One of those significant decisions was Carl’s wish to fulfill his lifelong dream of building a large and elaborate O gauge railroad. It would be, Carl told Merry,

beautifully landscaped and professionally wired, and it would bring him great satisfaction for he had dreamed of owning such a display for as long as he could remember. Truth be told, for much of that time he viewed it an impossibility.

Lionel catalogs had revealed to kids in the 1950s the playthings they could request as their top holiday or birthday gift and feel confident of getting.

Carl, however, had to be content with paging through

Carl appreciates the encouragement given by his wife, Merry, their son, Jason, and Daffey, their dog, as he built the layout of his dreams.



the catalogs and dreaming. His catalogs became worn, but his dreams were vivid.

TURNING POINT

Then in 1954 a wrapped box arrived at Christmas. Mr. and Mrs. Chancey had brought home an O gauge steam freight

set. Outfit no. 2225WS featured a no. 736 Berkshire and tender, along with five slick cars. The train included three operating cars and a crane car and work caboose.

That amazing gift was a turning point. Soon, Carl filled every waking hour, or at least all the time he wasn’t in school, with the marvels of Lionel railroading.





2 The Massachusetts Coastal RR diesel emerging from a tunnel rides as smooth and sharp as it looks. The engineer will finish his run rested and ready for more. Harry Hieke painted that MTH diesel and the Guilford Rail System unit in the foreground.

Carl kept expanding his railroad until by 1959 it was spread over a green-painted 4 x 8-foot sheet of plywood. The straights, curves, and switches created a three-rail empire that seemed better than the holiday displays he admired at Jordan Marsh & Co., a department store in Boston.

A turning point of a different sort came a few years later. Inevitably, other passions and priorities pulled Carl away from miniature electric trains. Attending college and launching a career dominated his thinking, although not to the extent that he forgot about O gauge railroading. Even during the almost three decades he spent in the American military, Carl did what he could to maintain an interest in trains.

STILL DREAMING

What's the secret to keeping big dreams alive? Carl smiles and offers sage advice: "Do whatever it takes to satisfy small versions of the same dreams. Then you won't give up hope." Certainly, the strategy he had unknowingly developed during his childhood.

Carl followed through by building compact three-rail layouts with his son, Jason. Years later, when Carl decided to retire in the new home Merry and he had selected, his visions of the perfect layout had grown clear and his talents been fine-tuned.

OPERATING DESIRES

Two wishes drove Carl's plans. To start, being able to run long freight trains over two levels of top-grade track was uppermost. Long double-track main lines were crucial, as were strategically located passing sidings. Carl deemed necessary a double crossover, even if it meant purchasing

Carl imagined owning the steam and diesel engines shown pulling realistic freight and passenger cars. The three-rail display presented in these pages is the fulfillment of dreams nurtured since the 1950s.

a specially designed section from Ross Custom Switches.

Of minor importance Carl decided,



3 As much as Carl enjoys the postwar lineup of locomotives and rolling stock assembled by Lionel, he built his roster with more contemporary models. They tend to come from the groups manufactured and sold by Atlas O, Lionel, MTH, and 3rd Rail.

was having an extensive yard. Switching railcars to assemble a train, which so many operators enjoy doing for hours, had never been a favorite activity of his. Honestly, he would be content having trains just there to get moving.

A second desire flavoring Carl's perfect O gauge railroad touched on his personal sense of identity. A native of New England, he insisted regional lines from the past and present were going to dominate. The different locomotives and rolling stock he bought or had others paint and

letter for him reflected his allegiance to Massachusetts and its neighbors.

Related to Carl's wanting his layout to capture railroading in New England, both postwar and contemporary, was the kind of scenery he preferred. Rolling hills, forests, shallow lakes, winding rivers, and historic cities should combine to suggest the part of the country he loves above all others. Structures, too, would bolster those regional feelings.

ADVICE FROM A HOBBY PRO

Plentiful reading of hobby publications supported all the experience Carl had accumulated, so he felt more than capable of handling the various tasks associated with building a layout. Admittedly, he had

never tackled anything on the scale of what he had in mind. Yet given sufficient time and resources, he felt confident he could do the job.

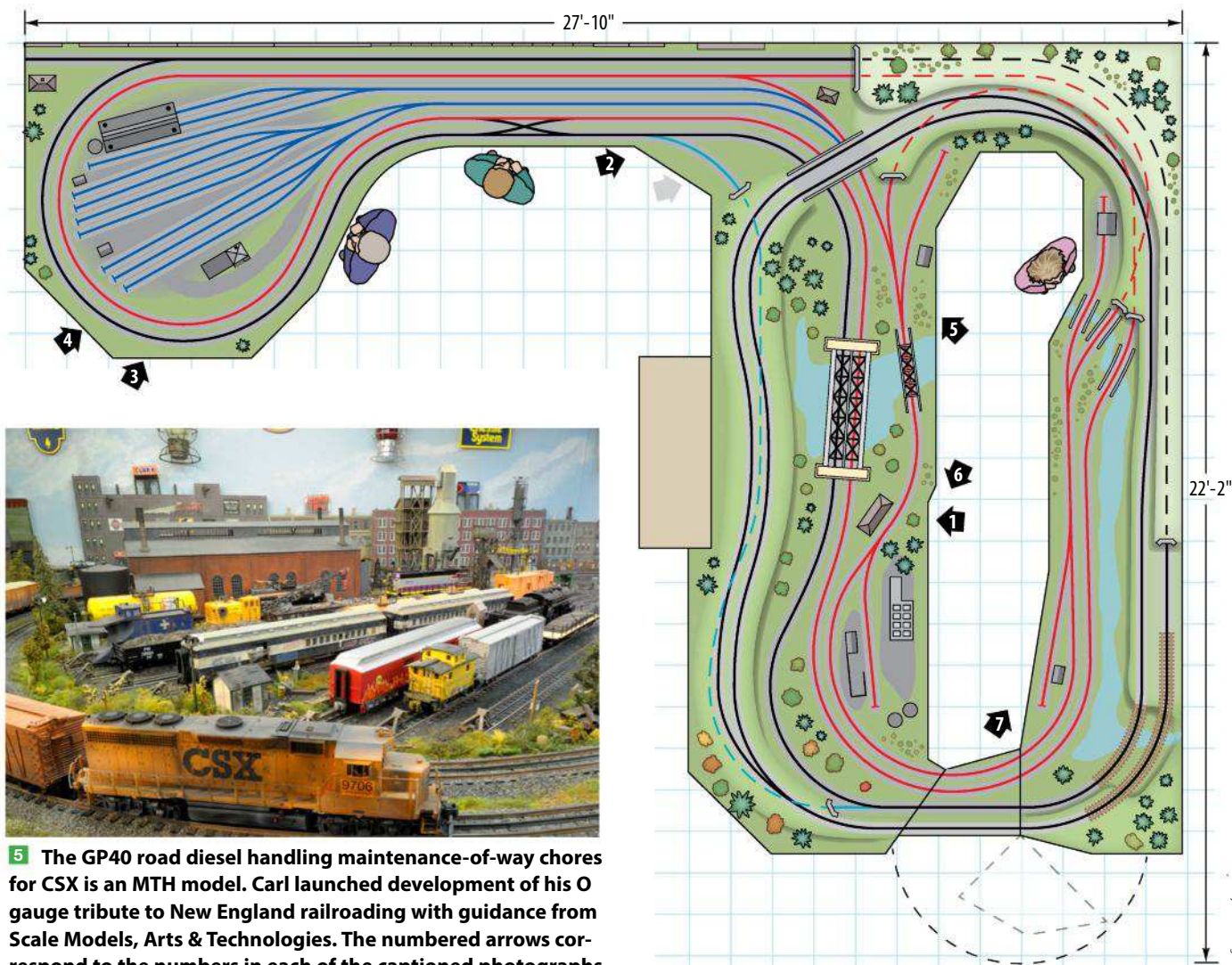
But there was the rub. Because Carl decided to resume his career, all the hours of leisure he anticipated failed to appear. His dream appeared to have been pushed off into the unknown future again, almost exactly the way it had happened when he was young.

Fortunately, Carl was in a position to find an alternative. He contacted Michael Hart, the owner of Scale Models, Arts & Technologies Inc., and discussed his goals and expectations. It didn't take long before arrangements had been finalized.

Hart and his crew commenced work on 10 modules eventually bolted together to create the layout of Carl's dreams. They relied on high-quality 1 x 4 lumber for the joists and 2 x 4 sections for the legs supported with cross braces. That framework secured subroadbed made using exterior-grade ¾-inch-thick plywood. The primary



4 The bright ditch lights on the Atlas O model of a Providence & Worcester RR GE Dash 8-39B road diesel almost leave you blind. Carl has loaded his roster with motive power and cars decorated for lines based in his native region of New England.



5 The GP40 road diesel handling maintenance-of-way chores for CSX is an MTH model. Carl launched development of his O gauge tribute to New England railroading with guidance from Scale Models, Arts & Technologies. The numbered arrows correspond to the numbers in each of the captioned photographs.

level was going to be 42 inches high; the elevated area would rise another 18 inches.

GarGraves track, chosen because of its realistic appearance, went on next for the pair of main lines on the layout. The first stretched over 186 feet; the second measured 150 feet. Layers of ½-inch-thick cork served as roadbed. Diameters of curves ranged from 54 to 72 inches.

Turnouts by Ross Custom Switches worked well. Ross also made the double crossover. All are operated using Tortoise switch machines.

Extensive knowledge of the power sources and the control systems on the market represented an advantage of Carl's working with SMARTT. The experts there advised Carl to choose command control over conventional. Therefore, after installing a pair of the Z-4000 transformers available from MTH, they added what he would need to operate his fleet of locomotives with Lionel Legacy as well as MTH Digital Command System.

DOING SCENERY TOGETHER

Carl conceived of the work being done by the artisans employed at SMARTT as a magnificent setting for the trains he loved to run. Once they had complete the over-all environment, he would be free to embellish their creations, inserting details

and finishing minor modifications to enhance the realism.

Take the mountains, for example. Hart and his staff traveled their customary path to make those landforms. Sculpted pieces of foam board as well as cardboard sections ended up being heavily covered with

AT A GLANCE

Name: Carl Chancey's O gauge layout

Dimensions: 22 x 32½ feet

Track: GarGraves (diameters range from 54 to 72 inches)

Switches: Ross Custom Switches

Motive power: Atlas O, Lionel, MTH, 3rd Rail, Williams

Rolling stock: Atlas O, Lionel, MTH, 3rd Rail

Controls: MTH Z-4000 transformers (2) with Lionel Legacy and MTH Digital Command System

Accessories: Evan Designs, Miller Engineering

Structures: Alan Graziano, Ameri-Towne, Design Preservation Models, International Hobby Corp., Model Building Services, Model Tech Studios, MTH, scratchbuilt, Walther's

Vehicles: Corgi, Diecast Direct, Ertl, Menards, SpecCast Collectibles, Tonkin Replicas

Figures: Arttista, MTH Electric Trains, Woodland Scenics



Hydrocal and Sculptamold. That rock-solid foundation demanded color, so the artisans at SMARTT used water-based green and brown paints.

Vegetation went on next. Assorted colors and textures of commercial ground foam looked right in some areas. Other spots required additional attention in the form of different brush and trees from, among other sources, Scenic Express and Sterling Trees.

Carl has done, in his own words, “an enormous amount of additional detailing” over the 15 years since the layout was installed. And he savors every moment: “I have found the process of fulfilling my dreams to be exciting, challenging, fun, and relaxing.”

Shifting his gaze to the layout, Carl

points out the hundreds of trees he has put on the slopes of his mountains. Another project involved creating a small swamp along the tracks. Elsewhere, he glued down different shades and sizes of tuft materials from Silflor. Having lived in New England for so long, Carl instinctively knows what individual scenes need to feel more realistic. Praise from folks visiting validates his endeavors.

Brief mention should be directed as well at the narrow river and the shallow pond. An epoxy resin poured over the decorated bottoms and banks of those waterways made all the difference. Meanwhile, hand-painted and commercial backdrops suggested great depth. Carl especially liked the mountain and city scenes available from Scenic Express.

UNIQUE STRUCTURES

The quest to show visitors what New England once felt like to a boy coming of age there as well as what it looks like today influenced so many of the decisions Carl reached regarding the layout. Developing realistic landscaping met one of his demands. Perhaps more difficult yet important was adding structures he trusted to be representative.

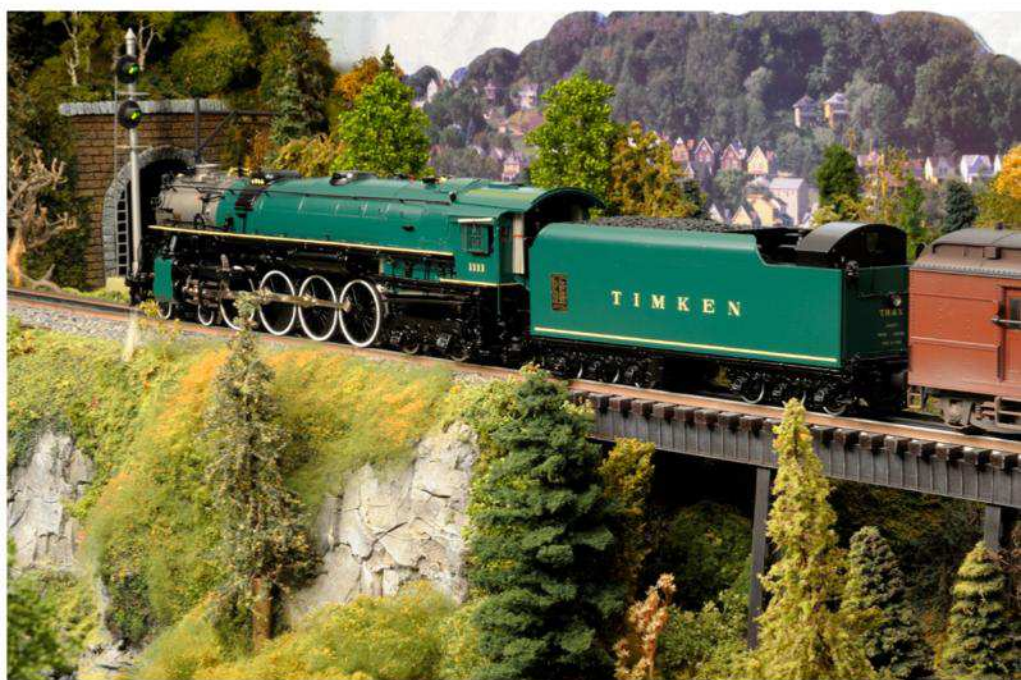
Just as collaborating with Michael Hart enabled Carl to show his locomotives and trains in the finest settings, so too would he need to fasten on the right builders of custom industrial, railroad, and residential structures. Carl would have to provide them with the information they required if he truly wanted to capture the atmosphere of his native land.



Identifying the finest craftsmen in the hobby proved critical. Nothing pleased Carl more than sharing names and then offering congratulations for jobs done exceedingly well.

Begin with the legendary Dave Frary, who built and weathered a filling station and a junkyard including the Quonset hut there. Another well-known modeler, Alan Graziano, supervised construction of a water tower, a propane-loading depot, and an eye-catching Texaco oil distribution center. Richard Fall scratchbuilt the elevator structure for the ash pit as well as the assorted metal sheds plopped along the main line and sidings.

Carl saluted the terrific handiwork of Stu Gralnik, who oversees Model Building Services. Stu, whose O gauge layout was



6 Wouldn't it have been wonderful to have been alive and active way back in 1930 and '31, when the Alco 4-8-4 demonstrator known as "Timken Four Aces" (3rd Rail replica) was conquering the Northeast? No wonder Carl likes to duplicate historic scenes of that nature on his O gauge model railroad.

7 The herald used by Pan Am Railways, which oversees several short lines in New England, brings back memories of the legendary airline with the same name. Carl remembers it very well, which explains his desire to operate these great-looking Electro-Motive Division GP40 road diesels produced by Atlas O.

profiled in the May 2016 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*, took on responsibility for two replicas of factories and a train station. He also built and decorated models of skid row structures, a retail produce store, an abandoned switch tower, and flats depicting tenements with several floors of balconies and fire escapes.

When possible, Carl chipped in with figures and details. He modestly refers to all the people he carefully added to various scenes, plus the food stands, magazine racks, tell-tales, soda machines, telephone booths, whistle markers, luggage pieces, oil drums, workbenches, freight containers, and a lot more. So much of what folks like he put on.

NOTHING MORE

Carl, when questioned about what he might like to change about his big layout, answers hastily and a bit defiantly: "Nothing at all!" The O gauge railroad of his dreams is, he went on, "fantastic and fun. It provides loads of enjoyment exactly the way it is."

Isn't that the best response? Something Carl as a child never imagined could ever be his has become a reality half a century later. Scenes and vignettes illustrated in old Lionel catalogs have in an unbelievable way come to life on his immense layout.

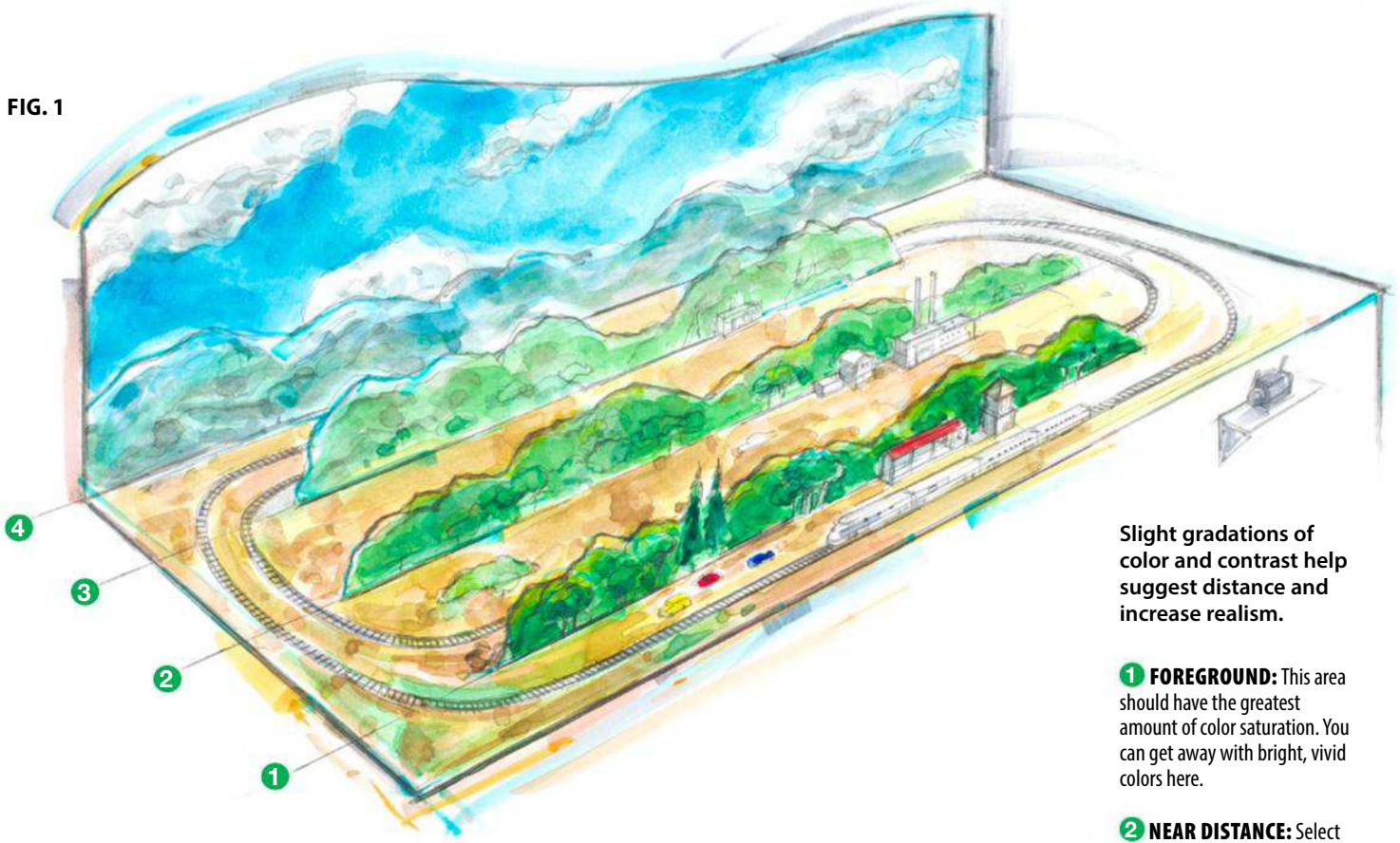
Of course, Carl has the great wisdom to appreciate this large and beautifully landscaped and detailed model railroad as it looks and operates. And he knows enough to feel grateful about it being in his home

Relating to Carl's wanting his layout to capture railroading in New England, both postwar and contemporary, was the kind of scenery he preferred. ... Structures, too would bolster those regional feelings.

to play with. Carl has it there to entertain friends and family while he relaxes by operating train after train. **CTT**

This superb O gauge model railroad, once located in the Chanceys' home, has now found a home with the New Jersey Hi-Railers Train Club in Paterson, N.J.

FIG. 1



Slight gradations of color and contrast help suggest distance and increase realism.

1 FOREGROUND: This area should have the greatest amount of color saturation. You can get away with bright, vivid colors here.

2 NEAR DISTANCE: Select colors that are slightly diminished in strength compared to the foreground in this zone.

3 DISTANCE: Colors in this area should be significantly weaker in value and saturation.

4 BACKGROUND: Dilute washes that reflect the coloration of the sky are best for this area.

The Sky's the limit!

USE THE BASICS
OF **COLOR** TO
CRAFT REALISTIC
BACKDROPS

Story and illustrations by Lawrence Goodridge

Color is one of the most important elements in layout design. It creates depth and space. Once you know the guidelines of using color, you will be able to create realistic skies and clouds and add a sense of distance in a modest amount of space.

Figure 1 shows the basics. The colors become lighter and less saturated as the scene moves from foreground to background. Distant edges should be softer, and there should be a reduction in detail.

You are seeking higher contrast and brighter color in the foreground, with lower contrast and color in the background. Do you want to include a bright orange warehouse? Place it up front and

not along the backdrop!

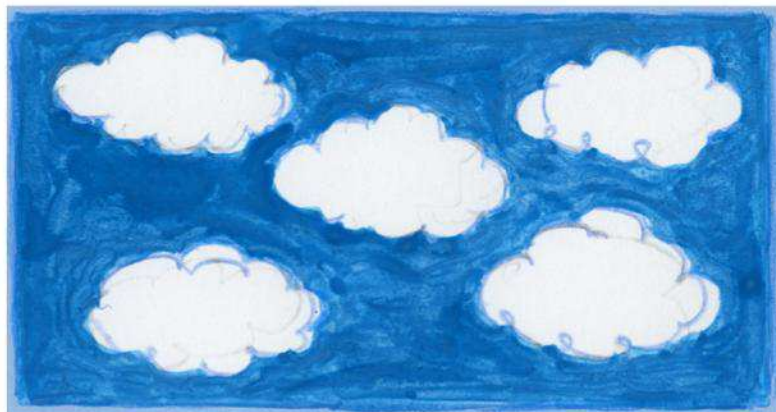
Of all the color issues model railroaders face, the sky is often the most challenging. I have seen spectacular layouts where the builder's excellent modeling was compromised by an intensely saturated sky with bright, contrasting clouds. A too-blue sky with cartoon clouds, as in **Fig. 2**, is not a happy combination when you're trying for realism! A light neutral blue with soft-edged clouds, as shown in **Fig. 3**, works better.

When it comes to the background and sky, less is more. Experiment. Try different base coats. If your sky color turns out weird – and believe me, it can – start over.

The same approach holds true in painting clouds (**Fig. 4**). If they look wrong, paint them out, have a cup of coffee, and start over. No clouds are better than cartoon clouds.

One final suggestion: never use cotton to simulate clouds, snow, or smoke. It always ends up looking like cotton! **CTT**

FIG. 2

NO!

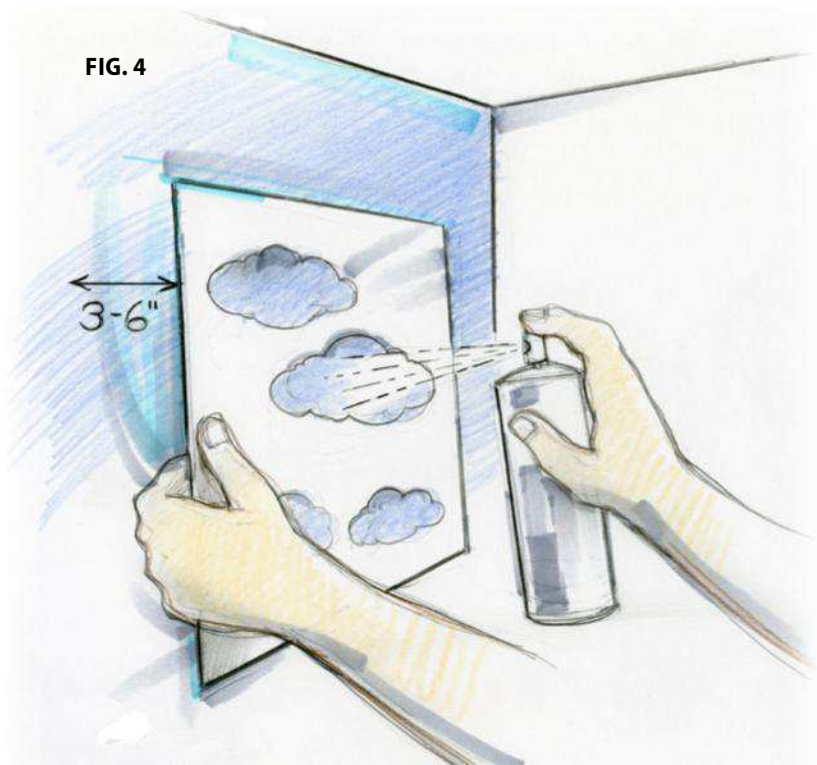
Distance is suggested by lighter, less saturated colors and softer-edged details. Here, a too-blue sky and overly defined cloud shapes add up to a cartoony effect.

FIG. 3

YES!

This is an example of a correctly painted sky and cloud. The soft blue sky doesn't overwhelm the scene. Note how the cloud uses layers of white and gray spray paints.

FIG. 4



A stencil held a slight distance from the sky backdrop forms the cloud shapes. The trick is to spray lightly while maintaining the same distance from the surface and keeping the stencil moving slightly.

SIX STEPS TO BETTER CLOUDS

1 Establish a light blue sky. Always use a **matte finish** paint!

2 Clouds are best achieved by **spraying** rather than **brushing**. An aerosol can of white automotive primer works well. Be sure to wear an approved spray mask.

3 Make a **stencil** from cardboard – 18 x 24 inches is a good size. Cut out multiple shapes using a sharp hobby knife. Aim for lumpy and slightly exaggerated cloud shapes.

4 Hold the stencil 3 to 6 inches from the surface, and **spray lightly** with white paint, as shown in **Fig. 4**.

5 Keep the stencil moving with a **slight rotation** as you're spraying.

6 This final step is optional and rather tricky, but it can yield spectacular results. Invert the stencil and **add underlying shadows** to the clouds, using light gray spray primer. Do this intermittently and very carefully. Less is more! I highly recommend practicing on a test surface.

Mess it up? Paint it out and start over – just keep telling yourself this is the fun part!

Take your time and make color work for you. When you get it right, you'll be rewarded with a final space-defining element on your scenic masterpiece. When your GG1 rolls majestically past that distant mountain range, kick back and enjoy the moment your expert use of color has created! – L.G.

Robert Sherman created the **IDEAL LIONEL LAYOUT**

CONSIDER THIS PLAN
FOR YOUR NEXT
O GAUGE PROJECT

By Roger Carp

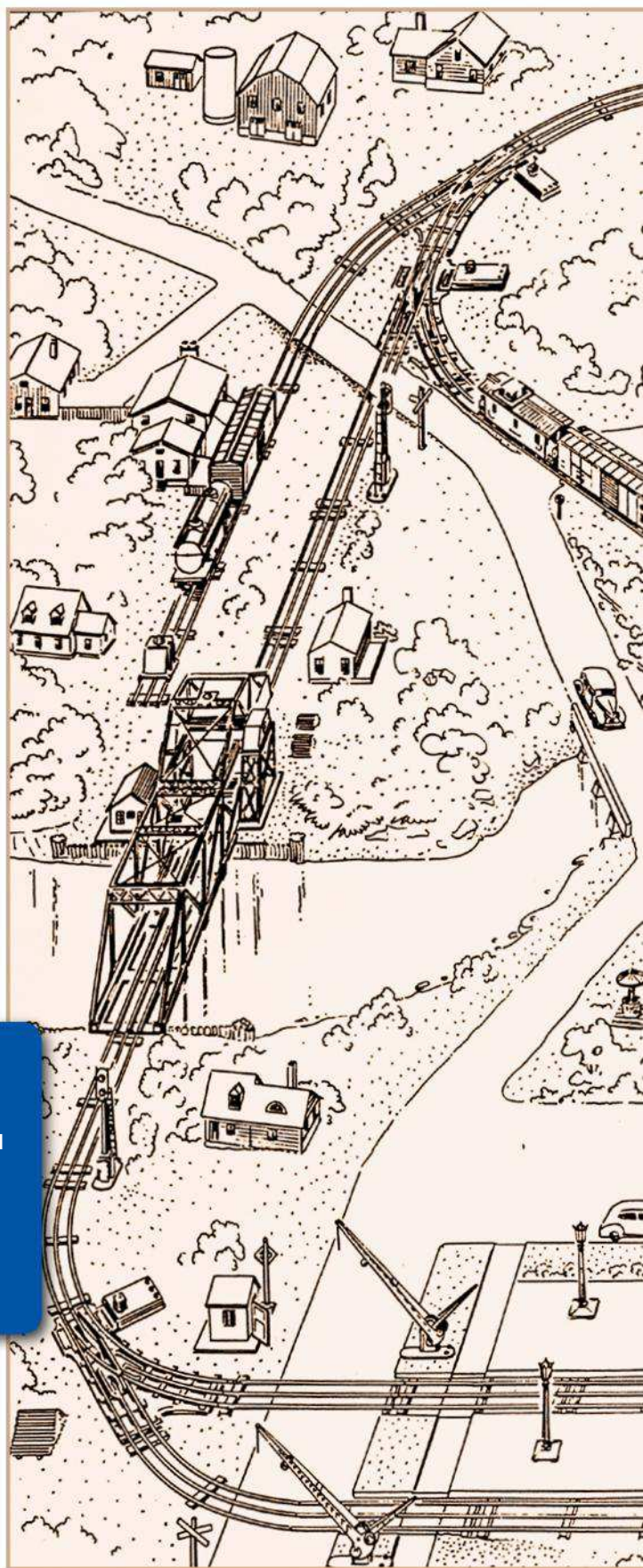
The contributions of Robert Sherman to the postwar greatness of Lionel continue to be both neglected and exaggerated. Hobbyists fail to credit him for what they love most about models from that era. Or they honor him for achievements never his.

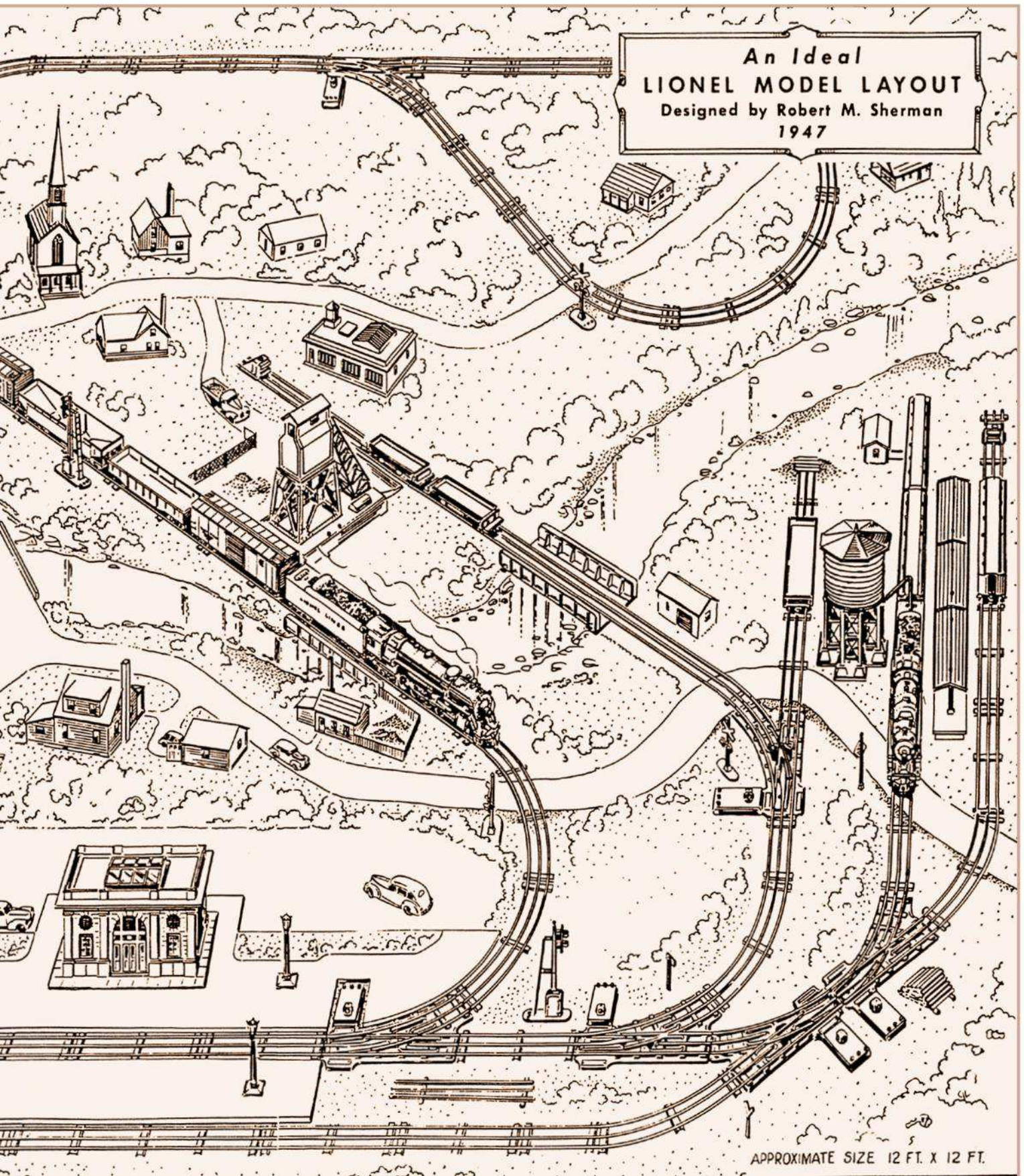
Bob worked primarily on the catalogs developed for the public from the late 1940s (1947 or '48) through the middle of the next decade (1953 or maybe '54). His assignments involved creating the outlines of artwork used to promote new sets and individual locomotives and rolling stock. Finishing the illustrations by inking different colors was seldom his responsibility. Instead, the Advertising Department farmed out that task to artists employed by outside agencies.

At the same time, Bob remained an irreplaceable member of Diorama Studios, designing and building small and large display layouts for Lionel. Bill Vollheim and Art Zirul referred repeatedly to the essential contributions Bob made to any number of projects. Above all, they credit him for developing the landmark O gauge layout built for the company's showroom.

Another plan bearing Bob's touch appeared a year or so earlier. In 1947, Lionel offered to consumers a promotional item attributed to him. Known as "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout," the diagram of a 12 x 12-foot three-rail extravaganza should help modelers appreciate his brilliance.

Robert Sherman, a model builder and illustrator, created "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout" at the request of Lionel Advertising Manager Joseph Hanson in 1947.





Bob, whether sketching an illustration at his drawing board or constructing a new project at a workbench, contributed any number of track plans. "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout" from 1947 stood among the most influential and inspiring.

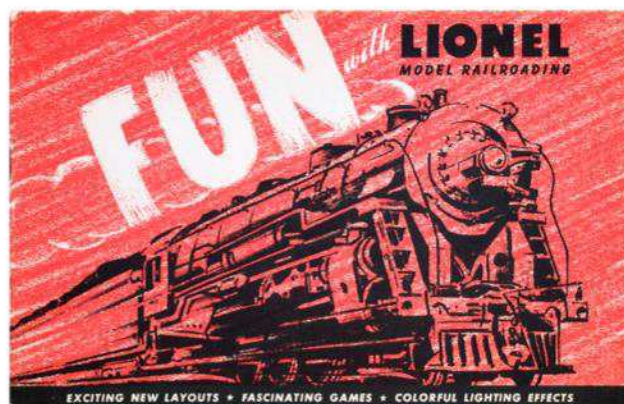
Booklets to stoke enthusiasm

"An Ideal Lionel Model Layout" was one of many pieces of literature Lionel used during and immediately following World War II to keep consumers enthusiastic about its trains and accessories. Advertising Manager Archer St. John and his successor, Joseph Hanson, believed it was absolutely necessary to remind the public about the company's products while stoking interest in any new ones.

The matter had been especially serious in 1943 and '44. A federal mandate enacted in the spring of 1942, just months after the U.S. had entered the global conflict, had forbidden domestic toy firms from using metals and other "strategic materials" for manufacturing any playthings. As a consequence, Lionel could not offer new models in the two latter years (and it didn't issue a consumer catalog).

St. John responded by compiling pamphlets containing photos of O gauge railroads and illustrations of full-size and model trains. He aimed to keep the brand in the public consciousness by offering for a nominal fee *Lionel Wonder Book of Railroading* (1943) and *Lionel Railroad Planning Book* (1944). They gave tips for enjoying trains and planning layouts.

Hanson followed suit after taking over the Advertising Department in 1945, even though authorities had lifted the ban on manufacturing new trains. He supervised publication of *Candid Camera Shots – Lionel Trains in Action*. It featured black-and-white images of several different private and public model railroads.



Joe Hanson sought to promote sales of Lionel trains by motivating customers to build layouts. He supervised production of booklets with tips on how to complete O gauge displays. *Fun with Lionel Model Railroading* from 1947 benefited from many of Sherman's plans and ideas.

1946, was directed at experienced O gauge enthusiasts who might have started on a layout. Its pages and drawings gave help for creating mountains, forests, lakes, farms, and other types of landscapes.

Ideas for 1947

Joe Hanson and his main assistant, Banning Repplier, set out to assemble a solid package of promotional materials for

1947. They intended to do so, despite having to concentrate the department's resources on the annual full-color catalog,

Hanson's purpose in issuing booklets, recordings, and charts differed from the one his predecessor had confronted. He

thought Lionel was confronting a problem unlike what it had during the recent war.

Instead of having to spark interest in Lionel toy trains at a time when production and sales had ceased, Hanson needed to sustain enthusiasm for them while they could be purchased and particularly after a family had brought home its first set. Maintaining momentum and pushing additional sales were his goals.

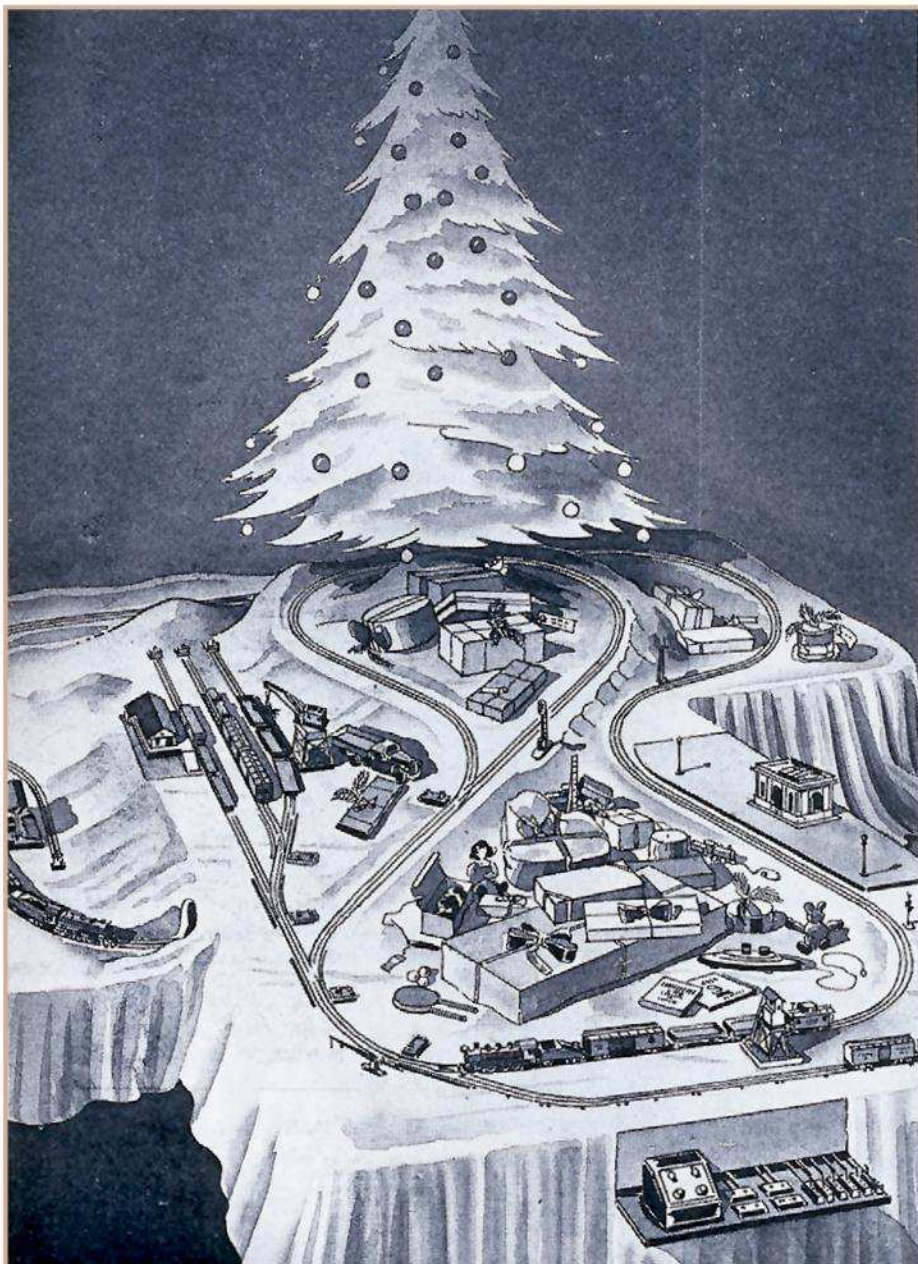
After all, as National Sales Manager Arthur Raphael had been advocating for years, that initial outfit could – indeed, it ought to – lead to a family buying more track and accessories, maybe even a second train, over succeeding years. It should be the foundation of a consumer's commitment to Lionel and its products.

The Advertising Department prepared a group of brand-new promotional pieces for 1947, all the while supervising the

***Fun with Lionel Model Railroading* was a 32-page brochure loaded with hints for building and lighting a layout.**

Not long after came *Plans and Blue Prints for Lionel Model Railroaders*. The tone and content of that pamphlet suggested it was geared toward novices.

Scenic Effects for Model Railroads – Lionel Trains, another publication released in



Some ideas that can give you an original and ingenious layout for the coming Yule.

By Robert M. Sherman

TRAINS at Christmas time! Whether it's a brand-new set for the very first time or a handsome addition to the old set or the trains moved from the permanent set-up to the living room or the tree set up by the train table or—but there are almost as many possibilities as there are model railroaders.

Of the thousands of model railroaders who work for months before Christmas, most will have layouts that express originality and demonstrate ingenuity. In many cases, however, the relative newness of sets, the lack of replacements during the war and other factors have combined to leave many people out on the proverbial limb as far as ideas and methods are concerned.

This article will present some ideas for an original, practical and not too difficult layout to be oriented around the Christmas tree and around the center of Christmas activities.

Limiting the Christmas layout in several ways—time, money and equipment, we find that about ten days of spare-time putting, some odds and ends for a table, sheets for scenery and not too much model railroading equipment can do the job.

Our first suggestion will be the most elaborate. It is illustrated on this page and is based on the use of a ping-pong table if available or upon the making of a simple table such as is illustrated in "A" on the opposite page. The substitute table consists of a proper-sized piece of masonite or beaverboard that is lightly backed with a frame and which can be set on cardboard or wooden boxes. It can be set to any height that appears to be convenient.

Long experience establishes the fact that an effective snow scene can be readily gotten with an old, white sheet and some commercial "snow." Paper and braces under the sheet will simulate the

MODEL BUILDER

Bob Sherman enjoyed creating three-rail track layouts whose scenery and structures reflected different seasons of the year. For *Model Builder*, the magazine put out by Lionel to generate enthusiasm for model railroading as well as its own product line, he had envisioned in 1946 a simple yet challenging plan with a winter theme for the holidays.

ongoing publication of the popular hobby magazine Lionel had been putting out since 1937. *Model Builder* printed well-illustrated articles designed to enhance any hobbyist's pleasure with miniature electric trains.

Fun with Lionel Model Railroading led the way among the new items. That 32-page brochure was loaded with hints for building and lighting a layout. Among the highlights were ideas shared by Bob Sherman on how to model the four seasons of the year (how-to articles originally published in *Model Builder* in 1946). He showed how a compact O gauge layout

could be landscaped to reflect the best of summer or winter, spring or fall.

A second promotional item available in 1947 was a wall poster, "Lionel R.R. Guide." The predominantly red and yellow piece publicized locomotives, rolling stock, and other parts of the latest line. It also gave consumers a great deal of information about real railroads and the replicas offered for sale from Lionel.

Sherman conceives of an ideal

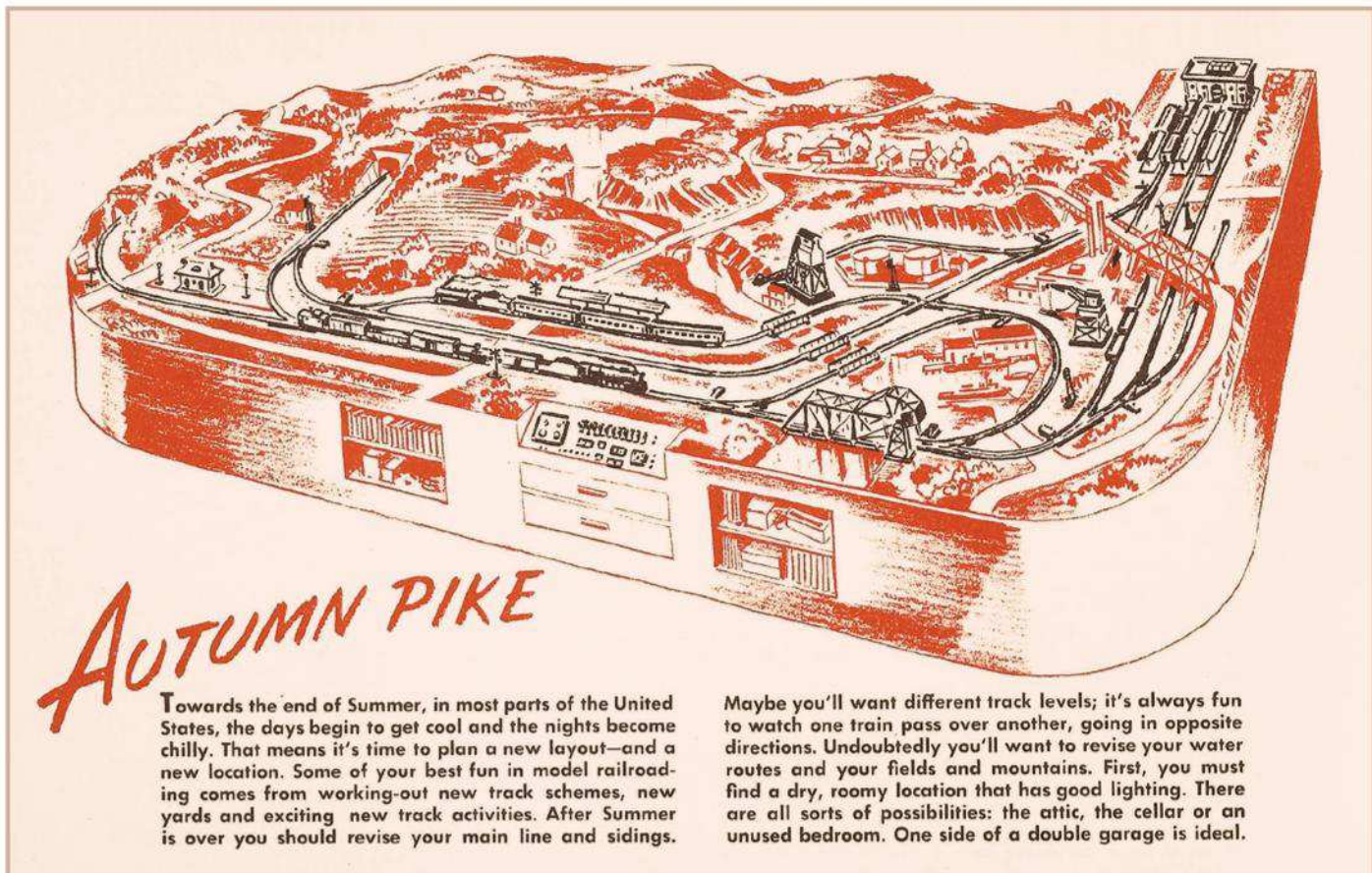
The February 1947 issue of *Model Builder* announced to readers that by mailing a quarter to Lionel's corporate

headquarters in New York City they would get *Fun with Lionel Model Railroading* and "Lionel R.R. Guide" plus a third item.

What was it? A track plan the copywriter had labeled simply "Blue Print Layout."

The mystery item was, of course, "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout." Lionel made it available in 1947 only. Two versions of the diagram ended up being printed. One measured 14 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches; the second was 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 16 inches.

The name of the plan tantalized. Did Bob call the sprawling three-rail display "ideal" because it represented his vision of the perfect layout? Or was he using that



AUTUMN PIKE

Towards the end of Summer, in most parts of the United States, the days begin to get cool and the nights become chilly. That means it's time to plan a new layout—and a new location. Some of your best fun in model railroading comes from working-out new track schemes, new yards and exciting new track activities. After Summer is over you should revise your main line and sidings.

Maybe you'll want different track levels; it's always fun to watch one train pass over another, going in opposite directions. Undoubtedly you'll want to revise your water routes and your fields and mountains. First, you must find a dry, roomy location that has good lighting. There are all sorts of possibilities: the attic, the cellar or an unused bedroom. One side of a double garage is ideal.

Another of Sherman's enterprising plans, which first appeared in *Model Builder*, brightened the pages of *Fun with Lionel Model Railroading* in 1947. He did more than just draw the diagram. The accompanying text that he wrote highlighted ideas for how to update the landscaping and operate trains once summer had given way to autumn.



Sherman usually relied on his experience as a modeler when devising track plans. On occasion, though, inspiration came from elsewhere. In the case of "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout," he studied a public display built by Lionel during the holiday season of 1946 to raise money for the Fresh Air Fund.

four of the finest, most expensive ancillary items Lionel had cataloged in 1946 and intended to bring back: the nos. 38 pumping water tower, 97 coal elevator, 115 city station, and 313 bascule bridge. Among top-shelf accessories, only the nos. 164 log loader and 182 triple-action magnetic crane were missing.

Not what was expected

Looking closely at what Bob had conceived, it came as a surprise that the plan lacked a continuous line of track on its perimeter. Such a loop would be an obvious feature – and one he might have assumed every modeler would desire.

Bob decided, instead, to develop a rather elaborate three-rail network pictured traversing a river and bordering assorted industries and stations. He did so

because, in his own words, "a train could run in both directions all the time."

The principal part of the system amounted to a folded dog-bone covering the top, middle, and left side. A train could, as Bob later noted in a letter, run through it without halting. An operator had only to adjust the various switches.

The lower section and right side of the diagram showed a secondary line connected to the dog-bone by switches. It led to a series of sidings closed off by bumpers. An ambitious operator would be able to send his or her train on a short trip through rural and urban scenery to make good use of different accessories.

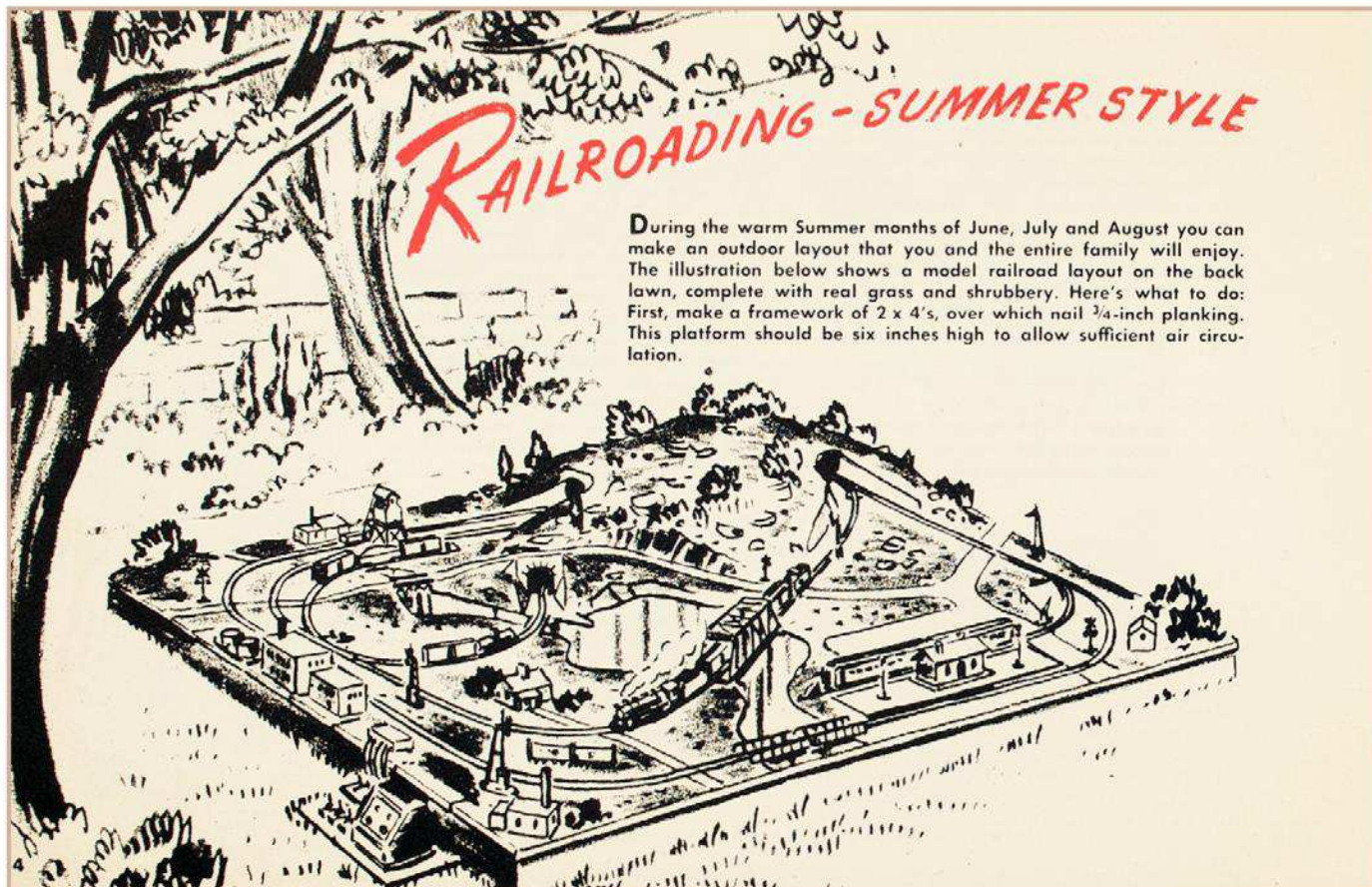
Source of ideas

Take a good look at "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout" and I think you'll agree Bob Sherman had come up with a sophisticated and enjoyable plan for an O gauge

word because he was setting a goal for modelers to dream of achieving?

If anything, the plan depicted was an ideal. Surely, the dimensions (nearly 150 square feet) surpassed what the many hobbyists, and probably most children, could hope to devote to a toy train display. A 12 x 12-foot layout was an empire!

Also, the accessories Bob picked represented the cream of the crop. He selected



Elsewhere in *Fun with Lionel Model Railroading*, Bob suggested that during the summer three-rail operators build a compact and nicely landscaped display outdoors. No sign of how the transformer in the foreground was connected to a power source.

railroad. Anyone building that display was guaranteed to have endless hours of pleasure, particularly if another hobbyist or even two joined in the operation.

Remembering how *Fun with Lionel Model Railroading* had capitalized on ideas Bob had previously published in *Model Builder*, I once asked him whether something in there had sparked his notion of an ideal three-rail layout. Maybe he had even drawn and described the 12 x 12-foot railroad for Lionel's magazine.

Ever gracious, Bob soon replied in a letter, informing me, "As far as I remember the layout had nothing to do with *Model Builder*." The source of his inspiration was a display Lionel had built in 1946 for the Fresh Air Fund. That charity, then sponsored by the *New York Herald Tribune*, raised money to send underprivileged children from the metropolitan New York area to summer camp.

Few pictures of that layout have been reported, so ascertaining the extent to which it prodded Bob's imagination remains futile. Evidently, that compact railroad included parallel tracks on one portion of its perimeter. Nearby a line

crossed the center, helping to form a reversing loop for continuous running.

Both the Fresh Air Fund display and "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout" made excellent use of low-priced accessories. Bob put on two no. 152 crossing gates, four no. 153 block signals, and three no. 154 highway signals. Two other favorites he wanted were a no. 45N automatic gate-man and three no. 156 station platforms.

Only a few structures appeared on the Fresh Air Fund layout (which was moved between Grand Central Terminal and Pennsylvania Station in New York City) and the ideal O gauge railroad. For the latter, Bob recalled having in mind a few commercial items (a Skyline church, for example) and several buildings made from scratch – as he often did for the articles he published in *Model Builder*.

One for the ages

In retrospect, the extent to which "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout" copied an actual O gauge exhibit seems unlikely to

be verified. Too many years have passed, and relevant sources may no longer exist.

It is similarly impossible to measure the influence of the plan – meaning, just how many model railroaders sought to build it in the early years of the postwar period? Somebody must have, though.

There is no reason why an ambitious hobbyist now should refrain from trying. The dimensions need not be forbidding. And even if original examples of the large accessories can tax a typical budget, modern-era reissues are plentiful.

Robert Sherman showed millions of Lionel enthusiasts how to enjoy their trains and accessories.

Check out the track plan Bob created for Lionel in 1947 to see whether it's right as the basis of your next layout. Or buy a copy of "An Ideal Lionel Model Layout" for \$20 to \$40 at a train show or online and frame it for your train room. **CTT**

Finding Marx's elusive Nickel Plate Road wedge tender



Discovery OF

Story and photos by Eric Beheim

No matter what brand of toy trains you collect – American Flyer, Lionel, or Marx – certain models elude you because so few were made and even fewer have survived. For Marx enthusiasts, a classic example is the Nickel Plate Road wedge tender. So you can see why I was thrilled to finally bring one home.

Sears connection

According to Marx authority Walt Hiteshew, the Nickel Plate Road wedge tender was included in only two of Marx's O gauge 7-inch train sets: the nos. 9909 and 9912. Both of those sets were made for and marketed by retail giant Sears, Roebuck & Co. (Could there also have been sets numbered 9910 and 9911?)

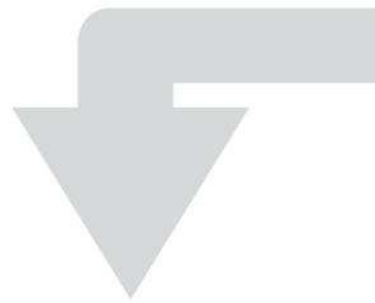
While Louis Marx & Co. seldom experimented with its 7-inch line, it appears these two sets were special variants for Sears customers who could afford a more expensive train. Both the 9909 and 9912 came from the factory with a no. 999 2-4-2 die-cast metal steam locomotive in place of the usual 994 black pressed-steel steam locomotive.



A lithographed Nickel Plate Road caboose was the perfect addition to each of the two Sears freight trains led by 999 steamers with Nickel Plate Road tenders.

In addition to the upgraded locomotive, set 9909 came with an extra gondola and a station. Its companion set, the 9912, included an extra boxcar.

Marx might have intended for these sets to be sold with its top-of-the-line no. 333 4-6-2 die-cast metal locomotive. That reliable steam engine



LEFT Louis Marx & Co. paired its popular no. 999 die-cast metal 2-4-2 steam engine with a scarce Nickel Plate Road 7-inch wedge tender in two uncataloged O gauge sets marketed by Sears, Roebuck & Co. sometime in the early 1950s.

BELOW Each of the two train sets Marx assembled for Sears with a Nickel Plate Road wedge tender differed in a key way from cataloged items. The no. 9912 came with an additional boxcar.

A LIFETIME

would have been a good visual match with the black Nickel Plate Road tender.

If Marx had meant to use the 333, then maybe after Sears had placed its order decision makers found it necessary to substitute the smaller 999 locomotive. That, in turn, would have made it necessary to come up with a smaller tender.

About all that Marx train

collectors know for certain is that sets 9909 and 9912 came with a no. 951 wedge tender, the one most often paired with the 999 steamer.

New York Central model

Other than a variation for the Army Supply Train, the 951 wedge tender (so called because of its shape when

viewed from above) was exclusively a New York Central model. Yet the order placed by Sears must have been large enough for Marx to justify making a special tender with Nickel Plate Road markings.

Once orders for the two sets had been filled, however, no more Nickel Plate Road wedge tenders appear to have been produced. Such a limited

quantity would account for the relative scarcity of the tenders on the collector market.

There was a time when a dedicated Marx collector might not see a Nickel Plate Road wedge tender for years. Nowadays, Internet auction websites and the many train shows being held make it easier than ever to find one of these elusive tenders. **CTT**



ENVY THE OWNERS OF THIS FLYER SET

FLYER SET NO. 4619

GREAT TRAIN WITH AN EXCITING ACCESSORY



Story by Roger Carp • Set courtesy Fred Lewis

Familiarity with the toy trains cataloged by more than one of the major domestic manufacturers during the postwar period enhances the pleasures of collecting. Comparing what Lionel and its competitors did reveals fascinating coincidences.

A trend promoted by the A.C. Gilbert Co. and Lionel involved packing an operating accessory with a freight train to create an expensive set offering lots of fun. The two rivals cataloged a handful of such sets right after World War II, with the Flyer no. 4619 exemplifying all that was best.

PREWAR EXAMPLES

The notion of including an accessory with a train to put together an appealing set originated in the prewar period. The American Flyer Manufacturing Co. and Lionel developed unique railroad systems

containing one or two trains as well as a full array of signals, stations, tunnels, bridges, and lights. The quantities of items included were astounding and the prices were dizzying.

Marketing executives at Lionel also took a more realistic approach. They assembled simpler and less-expensive packages that came with a low-end or a midrange train and one basic accessory. Obvious choices were a trestle bridge or an operating flagman. There might also be one or two switches with the track.

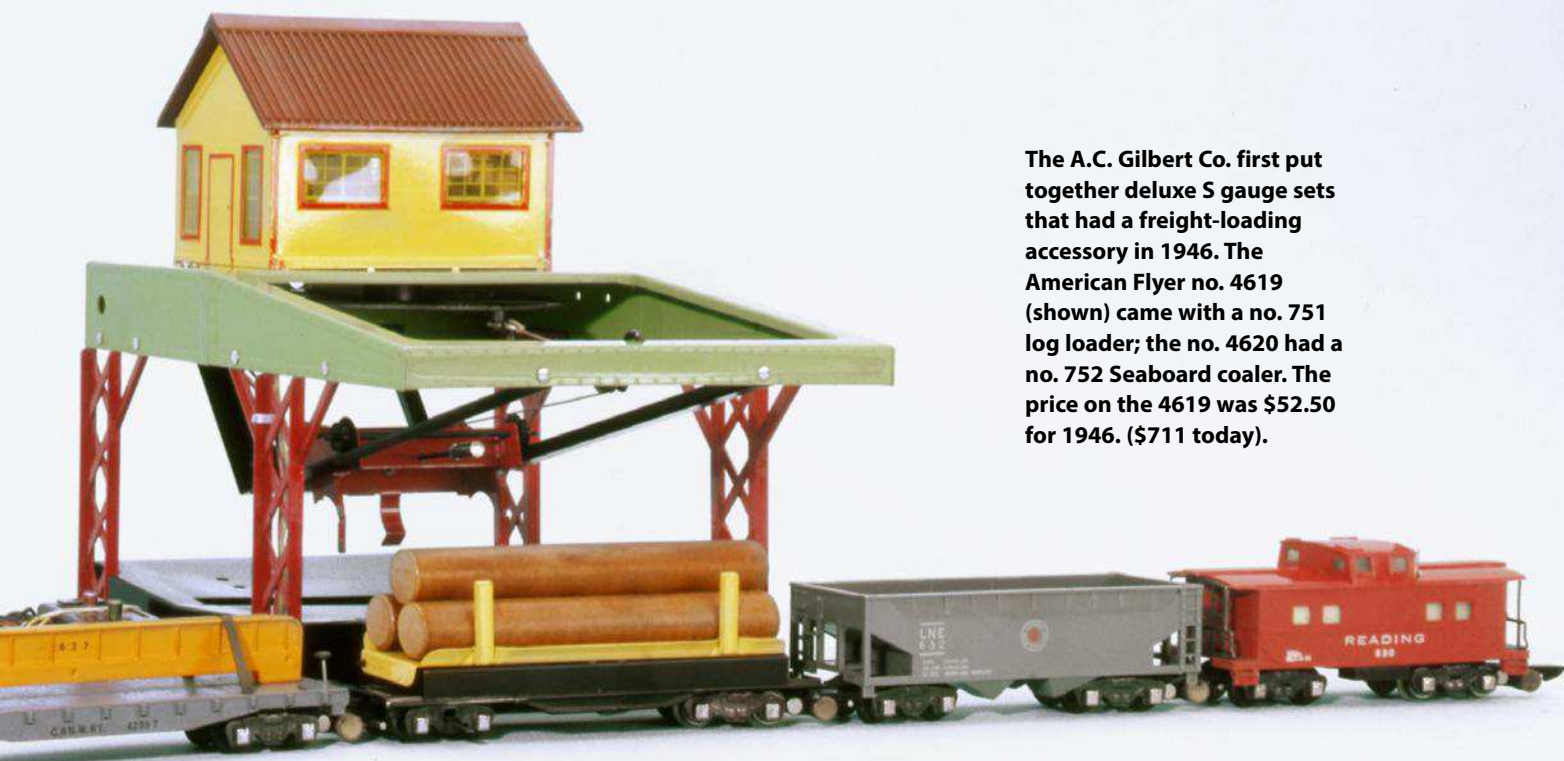
The goal when creating outfits with an accessory was



In 1946, Lionel had two sets with a train and an accessory. The advance catalog showed O-27 outfits no. 1419WS and 1421WS.

to reach out to department stores and national chains of retailers, such as Sears, Roebuck & Co. and Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. Lionel aimed its specialized items (whose con-

tents made them unlike any sets in its cataloged line) at particular customers to promote their name and boost sales while advertising its roster of electric trains.



The A.C. Gilbert Co. first put together deluxe S gauge sets that had a freight-loading accessory in 1946. The American Flyer no. 4619 (shown) came with a no. 751 log loader; the no. 4620 had a no. 752 Seaboard coaler. The price on the 4619 was \$52.50 for 1946. (\$711 today).



As soon as production of trains had resumed at full speed for Lionel and Gilbert after 1945, sets directed to every segment of the population hit retail outlets. It therefore made good sense to put an accessory in a few of them.

LIONEL UPS THE ANTE

For the Gilbert Co., 1946 would prove to be a watershed year. Executives, hopeful they could challenge Lionel, updated their prewar line as a full roster of S gauge trains, track, accessories, and more. The new catalog showcased American Flyer sets, locomotives and railcars, plus signals, bridges, stations, and loaders.

Lionel did the same for 1946. Each of the primary manufacturers of toy trains in the U.S. managed to put on the market a full offering. Included in each line were deluxe train

sets that packaged a top-of-the-line accessory with a train.

Which business first conceived of offering a special set of that nature remains a mystery. Lionel did showcase its pair in the advance catalog issued early in the year. There, dealers discovered O-27 outfit nos. 1419WS and 1421WS.

A new no. 2020 Pennsylvania RR 6-8-6 steam turbine served as the motive power for both four-car freight trains. Each set included an operating car to work with the remote-controlled loader packed with it. Outfit 1419WS featured a no. 3459 dump car to go with its no. 97 coal elevator. Set 1421WS included a no. 3451

lumber car to go along with its no. 164 log loader.

Lionel priced each deluxe outfit at \$85 – \$1,151 in today's dollars. Their astronomical cost almost certainly doomed the two items, both of which retailed for more than anything else in the line in 1946 except for one O gauge set.

FLYER CHIMES IN

Yet Gilbert matched Lionel with a pair of superb train sets giving purchasers a remote-controlled coal- or log-loading accessory. Sheer coincidence or brilliant planning? Had seeing Lionel's advance catalog sparked a response? Or had men behind the new American

Flyer line motivated Lionel to reply in kind?

Whatever the reason – and a full and accurate explanation seems unlikely after more than 70 years – we know only that the American Flyer line for 1946 featured two deluxe sets similar in nature to what Lionel had cataloged. Both were four-car freight trains with an operating car paired to one of the freight loaders.

Set no. 4619 used a no. 312 Pennsylvania RR 4-6-2 Pacific as the motive power pulling four cars. The best of the rolling stock was the no. 717 automatic log car with control box that handled the thick dowels manipulated by the no. 751 log



Components of set 4619 never changed through 1949. A no. 717 automatic log car accompanied nos. 627 girder car, 632 hopper, and 630 caboose pulled by a Pennsylvania RR K5 4-6-2 Pacific.

loader packed with the train and a loop of track. Any transformer was extra. The price on the 4619 was \$52.50 – equal to \$711 in today's dollars.

Flipping the page of the consumer catalog revealed the companion: the no. 4620 led by a no. 322 New York Central 4-6-4 Hudson. The star was a no. 716 automatic coal car with control box; it worked with the

iconic no. 752 Seaboard coaler. A no. 633 boxcar, 635 wrecker crane car, and 630 illuminated caboose finished the train. The set had more straights than the 4619, but no transformer.

STILL THERE

Gilbert kept the two sets in its catalog through 1949. Lionel deleted its items after just one year, presumably because

sales had been disappointing. It did add a 97 coal elevator to its no. 4110WS Electronic Control Set in 1948 and '49.

Perhaps the American Flyer pair had attracted more buyers. Conversely, the Gilbert Co. might have packaged too many sets in 1946 and so spent the succeeding years trying to unload its leftover inventory.

Looking inside the massive

corrugated cardboard boxes showed how little the 4619 and 4620 changed through 1949. Their motive power remained a Pacific and a Hudson, respectively, but the models underwent modification, notably being given AC motors.

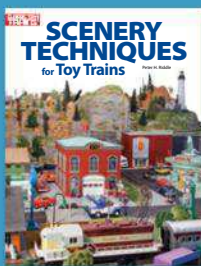
The cars filling out the 4619 never changed. A no. 627 girder car, 632 hopper, and 630 illuminated caboose joined the log dump car. The quantity of straight track rose from two sections to four after 1946 to form a 160-inch oval.

Things stayed the same with the 4620 through 1949. The only change of note saw a no. 636 depressed-center flat-car replace the 635 after 1948.

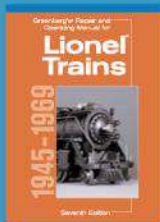
What distinguishes the Lionel and Flyer sets is the packaging, notably, the box in which everything was packed. To own the huge carton is to have a rarity; all the individual items are commonplace. **CTT**

Build a BETTER Toy Train LAYOUT

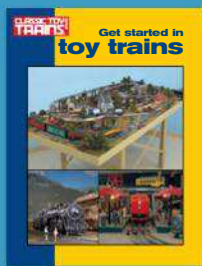
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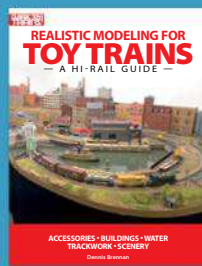
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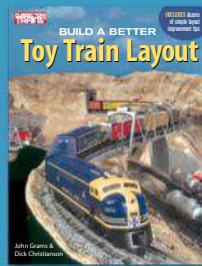
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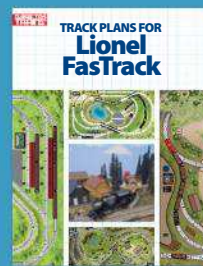
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WEEKEND WORKSHOP

WITH THE CTT READERS AND STAFF



No matter the medium, photographing your trains is easy. Shown here are a few “point-and-shoot” cameras that allow viewing the image on the back monitor and a 35mm or digital single lens reflex camera (DSLR) for viewing through the top prism. This table tripod by Gorilla Pod is perfect for this work and forms easily to any position.

Aim at your train and say “Smile!”

TAKING PHOTOS FOR INVENTORY, INSURANCE, OR RESALE IS EASY AND FUN

Photography is an important part of the toy train hobby. You may be taking pictures of full-size railroad locomotives or equipment or snapping photos of an old structure you want to model.

Let me tell you about another use of photos. We often need to take pictures of our models for insurance or personal records – just in case someone breaks into your house looking for valuables.

These photos can be done inexpensively, without much time or effort, and will be handy in case of fire or theft. We’ve all read of toy trains

being stolen, and too often the owners had no way of proving the trains were their property. Photos are the first step.

As you work through your collection, you can mark each item with a lead pencil and photograph them as part of

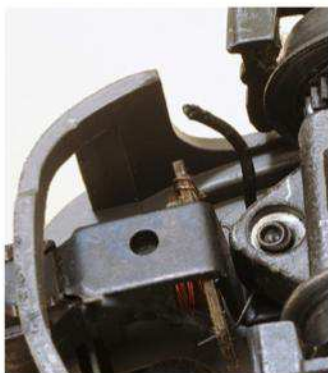
your records. Other options would be to place a self-sticking address label within the body of the car or locomotive



If your camera won’t let you focus as close as you would like, supplemental two-element close-up lenses fill the bill with aplomb and require no additional exposure correction.



The more popular DSLR cameras offer the ability to adjust the f/stop for more depth of field on smaller objects. This Nikkor Macro lens is set for f/32 with the focus on manual.



When photographing your equipment for record, look for the smaller details (like a broken wire) that will help the identity process in court.

or to document a scratch or paint chip, proving ownership through photography.

Where to begin

You may use any 35mm film or digital camera. Yes, there are still places you can get film processed and printed, later storing it for record. Digital images can be printed online or at most pharmacies.

You can also store images on your hard drive, but it can fail. Placing images on a jump drive or CD is better. Avoid recording your images on a cell phone! Why?

The ability to focus close and with good detail is very important, as a court will want absolute proof the old Lionel no. 2025 engine is yours, complete with some kind of mark that shows ownership.

Shooting the images

Along with a decent camera, set your file to JPEG, fine capture and white balance on auto. If you can't focus close enough, you can improve your efforts with the help of an inexpensive +1 or +2 close-up lens easily attached to the front of the lens. A cheap floor or table tripod ensures a crisp image.

Consult your instruction manual to set the camera's ISO anywhere from 100 to 400 with a lens opening of f/16 to f/22 for clarity of your rolling stock

DIGITAL STORAGE OPTIONS

Portable hard drive or USB drive. SanDisk makes a 128GB Connect Wireless USB drive with built-in Wi-Fi for you to back up your cell phone images without a physical connection.

If you use a digital camera, take your photos with a dedicated SD card, remove it, and safely store it.

COMMERCIAL CLOUD STORAGE:

Shutterfly: Free unlimited storage; **Amazon Prime:** 2GB free storage for Prime members; **Dropbox:** 2GB free; **Microsoft OneDrive:** 7GB free; **Google Drive:** 15GB free; **Apple iCloud:** 5GB free.

from front to back.

Shut off the autofocus and the image stabilization, and focus all images manually about a third of the way back on the object for depth of field.

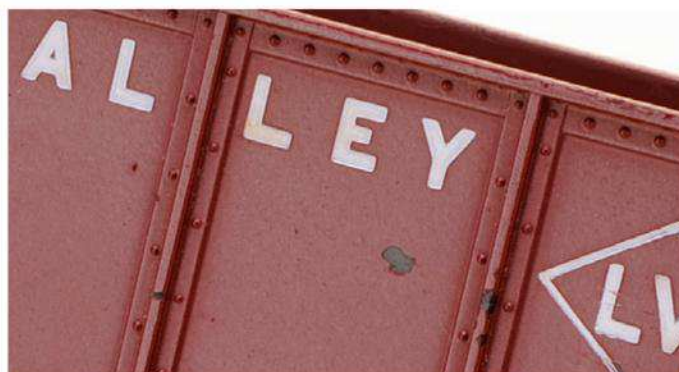
Taking photos is easy. To build a makeshift studio, purchase an off-white window shade at least 24 inches wide. The shade can be used outside, draped over the railing of a porch or clamped to a small ladder or chair. Another idea is to buy a few sheets of 32 x 40 inch white craft paper.



On the bottom of my Lionel no. 6460 crane car, a small "X" with a pencil shows ownership. Your initials could be used as well.



Clear photographs and close-ups are important. Broken chips of red paint when zeroed in are an undisputed way of showing possession.



On this Lionel Lehigh Valley hopper, a large chip by the logo will clinch the deal on who owns this car.

Lighting

For lighting, consider photographing your subject outside on an overcast day, allowing the sky to act as one big light diffuser. Hard shadows will be gone, giving you plenty of soft light to move your equipment at different angles to show all its details.

To shoot inside, set up your equipment near a window; again, an overcast day is good. However, you'll need a reflector

on the opposite side of the object to even out the lighting on both sides; a mirror or white card works well.

Don't use a flash unless you can bounce the light off a low ceiling or cover the flash head with a thin white handkerchief to diffuse the light.

When the photo prints come back, don't be afraid to write, mark, or caption each with remarks relating to your ownership. If the worst happens, a court will appreciate your attention to detail, thus making it easier to get everything back to you in a reasonable time.

Whether you are a dealer buying or selling trains or a collector wanting to protect your possessions, pictures are a sure way to ensure the retrieval of your goods. They are easy to take, fun to file, and permanent. – Stan Trzoniec

If you choose to use window lighting, a mirror or white card on the opposite side of the car or locomotive will balance the lighting. Use the mirror to show both sides of the rolling stock.



The O gauge U.S. Post Office is a terrific structure with wood shingle and field stone texture as well as all the lifelike details you've come to expect from Woodland Scenics. The wind-blown American flag is a real "wow" factor.

Wait a minute, Mr. Postman!

O GAUGE POST OFFICE FROM WOODLAND SCENICS

Back in the early 1990s, I was driving between Who-Knows-Where and Nowheresville, New Mexico. The terrain was bleak and, except for the road and utility poles, there were few signs of civilization. Then out of the blue, there was a small United States Post Office building out in the middle of absolutely nothing. I was pretty impressed.

When I opened the box from Woodland Scenics and saw the firm's newest Built-&-Ready O gauge structure, that lonely sentinel of American communication was the first thing that came to mind.

Those snow-and-sleet guys are everywhere – including an isolated outpost along the highway to Nowheresville. That is pretty neat when you think about it.

OPENING THE BOX

This is a delightfully detailed structure that can easily be used on a railroad modeling any period from 1900 to today. This will look right at home on landscape ranging from Vermont to Oregon. It isn't specific to a timeframe or a region.

The design is a conventionally constructed wood structure with what looks like about three layers of stone as a foundation.

BUILT-&-READY U.S. POST OFFICE FROM WOODLAND SCENICS

Price: \$129.99 (no. BR5864) **Features:** Fully assembled and decorated, illuminated interior, cardstock interior, freestanding mail box, designed for the Just-Plug lighting system.

The front has a porch with a single step. The shingled roof is supported by two posts and has visible supporting beams beneath the overhang. The porch has a wood texture top. Over that you'll see a U.S. Post Office sign and a vent.

The front of the structure has a door with a window and three front windows and a window looking in from the left side. All the window frames and the door are what I'd call a Kelly green. This contrasts nicely with the white of the exterior walls.

The door has a sign showing the hours of operation, and there is a street number sign.

Looking through the windows you'll see a cardstock interior with a postal service window, FBI wanted posters, a doorway to the

REAR VIEW



The rear of the structure has a delivery door and truck bumper, along with a hose for washing down mail vehicles (or watering the postmaster's flowers).

postmaster's office, and a batch of post office boxes. It catches all the key points (or clichés) of a small-town mail center. You also get a tried-and-true blue mailbox to place anywhere it suits your whimsy.

AROUND THE CORNER

On the left side of the building is an electric meter with a conduit rising up the side. A bit farther back is a stairway rising to a platform and door that must be the employee entrance. At this point, the foundation raises about six levels of stone.

Turn the corner and you'll find a wall with a roof vent at the top. Turn the corner again and you'll find a two-door loading dock for mail trucks. The delivery doors have a wood panel texture, brass tone handles, and one sign advising "Notice" and the other "Authorized personnel only." There are safety stripes on the bumper.

The wall to the left of the doors looks to be behind the post office boxes. Hang a right turn and you'll see a neat detail: a rolled-up water hose (probably for washing delivery trucks). Take a few more steps and hang another right, and you're back around to the front.

If you didn't notice it before, now you'll see the best "wow" inducing detail: an American flag stylized as waving in the breeze. A lot of toy train flags are straight as a board, but this angles downward and billows as if there were a light breeze. There is a light from beneath the roof, aiming toward the flag. Stunning.

The U.S. Post Office from Woodland Scenics is a superbly crafted structure. It may not work on a New York City-focused layout, but it will look right at home on the other 99 percent of America's three-rail layouts. – Bob Keller

LOTS OF LOCO!

By commercial standards, the Alco PA diesel could best be called a magnificent failure. Oh, the carbody design was unique to Alco – it was as distinctive among diesels as EMD's FT or F3 was to steamers. It was also streamlined in a muscular way. It appeared more powerful than graceful.

The carbody was a great canvas for virtually any railroad's livery: Santa Fe's warbonnet, New York Central's lightening stripes, and Southern Pacific's *Daylight* livery all looked larger than life on a PA.

The model was produced as both PA (cab unit) and PB (cabless booster) models between 1946 and 1953, and nearly 300 were built. Not all that impressive during the mad rush to dieselize, but soon the Alcos could be found at the head of many prized passenger trains.

Although 17 U.S. railroads, the American Freedom Train, and the Sao Paulo Ry. of Brazil ordered Alco PAs, the diesel soon became fairly unpopular. The problematic Alco 244 prime mover's engine plagued not just the PAs but also the entire Alco product line. Many railroads divested themselves of the locomotives at the earliest opportunity. By 1966, the primary PA users were the Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific, with roughly 70 between them.

When the Santa Fe eliminated its PA fleet, four were rebuilt as PA-4 diesels and sent to the Delaware & Hudson Ry. They had a short second career hauling the *Adirondack* passenger train until 1977. The PAs then migrated to the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, where they operated before being sold to a Mexican railroad.

As best as I can determine, there are three ex-Santa Fe/D&H PAs preserved in North America: two in the U.S. and one in Mexico. A bit farther south, one has reportedly been preserved in Brazil. However, I could uncover little more than a few sad photos.

OPENING THE BOX

Our review sample of the O gauge Premier line PA from MTH Electric Trains has an eye-popping (in a good way) color scheme. It is the bright liv-

O GAUGE
ALCO PA
FROM
MTH
ELECTRIC
TRAINS



The business end of the PA really pops, thanks to its colorful livery, bulging number boards, and lower stripe leading down toward the rails.

ery of the SP's *Daylight* passenger service. Launched in 1922, the train operated on a 13-hour schedule between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The most notable power at the head of the train was the SP's brightly colored GS-2 class steam locomotives, which shaved a considerable hunk of time off the schedule. Other diesels, including the Alco PA, took the point at various times. *Daylight* service continued until May of 1974.

The overall size of the A-B duo is impressive. The coupler-to-coupler length of the combo is approximately 33½ inches.

PRODUCT REVIEWS



photo Don Sims



The Alco PA is a wonderful design for virtually any railroad's livery. As the Southern Pacific unit (far left) illustrates, the Alco looks large and powerful, if not speedy. Today, at least three PAs survive.

The pilot is fairly plain and appears less rounded than that of an F unit. You'll find an operating coupler and simulated brake lines. The upper light fixture houses an oscillating white headlight, while the lower light is a steadily lit headlight.

There are jumbo number boards on the sides, with classification lights just above them. These are distinctive, and the numbers really stand out, especially when running in the dark.

From a head-on perspective, the accent striping seems to guide the bands of red and orange to the front and then down toward the track. This is an eye-catching paint scheme!

With its oscillating warning light, headlight, number boards, and classification lights, the nose boasts most of the lighting effects.

The cab is illuminated and features two crew figures. You'll see wiper arms above

the forward windows and grab irons above those. Two horns are above the center of the windows.

The long hood roof has cast-in rivet and seam detail, and of note are the lift rings, exhaust stack, and see-through screen above the radiator fan. There is also a non-functional exhaust in about the right spot for a passenger steam generator. The booster has the same rooftop detailing as the cab unit.

These models are large, yet they're designed for turns as tight as O-31. Accordingly, there is bit of a gap between the units.

The sides have good rivet and seam detail. There are see-through screens and vents below the roof line, from behind the cab door to the rear of the unit. There are two opening doors with kickplates and grab irons on the sides of the cab unit plus one on the booster unit.

The *Daylight* colors hearken back to a time when passenger trains were still the way to travel. The livery was flawlessly rendered, running from black to silver to vermillion to silver to orange to silver and back to vermillion and silver.

ON THE TEST TRACK

After a quick lubrication, this MTH unit delivered smooth performance.

The smoke unit was capable of a mighty stream of vapor that can cloud up a tight space in no time at all.

I watched with great interest when the A-B duo wiggled through the "S" curve on our test track with no trouble at all. The sound system, bell, and horn were good.

Due to the O-54 curves on our layout, I was hesitant to really open the throttle. I decided to take a chance and run the A unit with the B unit (for extra weight, figuring it would improve the chances of staying on the track) at higher speeds. It paid off, with the duo achieving a top speed of 90.9 scale mph.

Our low speeds were 8.4 scale mph (conventional) and 6.2 smph (command). The drawbar pull was 1 lb., 14 oz.

Though it lacked commercial success, the PA is an icon of first-generation diesel power. MTH's Premier line version is a reliable performer that could become the king of your O gauge fleet. – Bob

PREMIER LINE O GAUGE ALCO PA-PB FROM MTH

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CLOSING DATES: Jan 2018 closes Oct 30/Feb 10, March closes Dec. 8, May closes Feb. 8/July 10, Sept. closes June 10, Oct. closes July 2/Nov 10, Dec. closes Sept. 93.

Events

CA, SAN CARLOS: European Train Enthusiasts (<http://www.ete.org>) EUROWEST at Hiller Aviation Museum, San Carlos Airport, 601 Skyway Road, Zip: 94070. July 21-22, 2018, Saturday 10:00am-5:00pm and Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm. Layouts, clinics, vendors, raffle. Admission (<http://www.hiller.org>) includes Air Museum, free parking. Contact Dave Cowl: eurowest@ete.org

CO, DENVER: Rocky Mountain Train Show July 28-29, 2018. Forney Museum of Transportation, 4303 Brighton Blvd. Denver, CO 80216. Saturday, 10:00am-5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am-3:00pm. 80 sales tables, 30 vendors, operating layouts, model trains of all scales. Other shows: Loveland Nov. 24-25, 2018, Denver Mar. 2-3, 2019. Email: information@RockyMountainTrainShow.com. Visit: www.RockyMountainTrainShow.com

FL, TALLAHASSEE: 27th Annual Big Bend Model Railroad Association's Show & Sale. North Florida Fairgrounds, 441 Paul Russell, Buildings 2 (Thomas) & 4. Saturday, June 23, 2018, 9:00am-4:00pm; \$6.00 for children 13 & over & adults, children 12 & under & scouts in uniform free admission. Information: Andy Zimmerman, 850-524-4399, E-mail: GNTrainman@comcast.net

IL, CHICAGO: Lionel Collectors Club of America will hold its 48th National Convention July 23 through 28, at Westin Yorktown, Lombard, IL. Includes area tours, banquets and train store exclusively for LCCA members, swap meet open to the public Free Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm. LCCA club membership details on club website Lionelcollectors.org. Convention details at website early 2018.

MA, BOXBOROUGH: NASG National S-scale Convention: July 24-29, 2018, hosted by Bristol S-Gauge Railroaders at the Boxboro Regency Hotel, Vendors, Clinics, Tours, Auctions, Model contest, operating layouts & more. Cost varies with registration date and activities selected. For full information: www.bsgr.us or email doug@portliens.com

NJ, BRICK: National Collector's Club Show, Elks Lodge, 2491 Hooper Avenue. Brick, NJ 08723. Sunday, July 15, 2018, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$6.00; under 10 free with adult. John LaLima 732-845-5966. Go to www.eastcoasttrainparts.com and click on The Brick Show.

NJ, WAYNE: National Collector's Club Show, P.A.L. Hall, 1 Pal Drive. Wayne, NJ 07470. Sunday, July 22, 2018, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$6.00; under 10 free with adult. John LaLima 732-845-5966. Go to www.eastcoasttrainparts.com and click on The Wayne Show.

WI, LA CROSSE: Rail Fair, Copeland Park, Rose & Clinton Streets. July 28, 2018, 10:00am-4:00pm. Admission \$5.00, under 12 free. Railroad Show, Sale & Exhibition. Model, Toy & Antique Trains & Memorabilia, Railroad Exhibits & Displays. Information: 4000 Foundation, PO Box 3411, La Crosse, WI 54602, 608-781-9383

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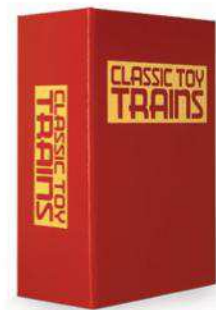
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A NIFTY TRACK CLEANER ADDENDUM

EDITOR'S NOTE

In our **October** 2013 Tips column, Harry Noble showed how to make a simple track cleaner using a Marx truck with tab-and-slot couplers. Here, he adds a variation to the project by using a Marx knuckle coupler instead of a tab-and-slot type.

The basic bits and pieces I originally used were a Marx Type F truck and a handful of parts. These included a Marx tab-and-slot coupler (rivet mounted), an O gauge wheelset, a 2 x 3-inch piece of cotton flannel, a 1 3/4-inch length of quarter-round wood trim molding, a no. 4 x 3/8-inch round, a Phillips-head wood screw, and a no. 6-32 x 3/8-inch slotted-head machine screw with a nut.

I folded the cleaning pad over the quarter-round trim and attached the cloth-covered wood trim to the truck using the no. 4 wood screw. This replaced one wheel on the truck. Next, I used the no. 6-32 machine screw to secure a tab-and-slot coupler to the truck before installing the wheelset.

I attach the truck to the drawbar of a steam locomotive without its tender and run the unit around my layout. Adding a bit of track-cleaning fluid to



1. Other than substituting one type of Marx coupler for another, the parts needed for this simple project are the same as outlined in our October 2013 issue: a Marx coupler (rivet mounted), an O gauge wheelset, a 2 x 3-inch piece of cotton flannel, a 1 3/4-inch length of quarter-round trim molding, a no. 4 x 3/8-inch round, a Phillips-head wood screw, and a no. 6-32 x 3/8-inch slotted-head machine screw with a nut. 2. This is a view of the tab-version of the assembled coupler. 3. This is the assembled coupler-equipped version. 4. The Marx coupler arm has a reinforcing rib that must be filed down.

the pad helps remove stubborn dirt. You could even substitute very fine-grit, wet-or-dry sandpaper for the fabric pad.

The updated version of the project applies to operators who prefer a knuckle coupler on their track cleaner.

I used a Marx knuckle coupler, two washers for 1/4-inch

size bolts and two washers for no. 6 or 8 size screws.

Next, I modified the knuckle by filing off the bump on the knuckle finger. Once the surface was flat, I used super glue to affix a small washer to the outside of the knuckle. I filed down the reinforcing rib of the coupler arm.



Next, I fastened the coupler to the truck's top frame with the machine screw, using a small washer above and two large washers below the coupler arm.

You need only apply cleaning fluid to the pad, couple it to a locomotive, and start cleaning! – Harry Noble



AVOID A GOOEY MESS

Applying ballast and glue can make a bit of a mess on your rails. I was glad to discover that the throw-away blade savers on Rain-X wiper blades make perfect temporary rail covers for this task. – Jeff Rigling

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