

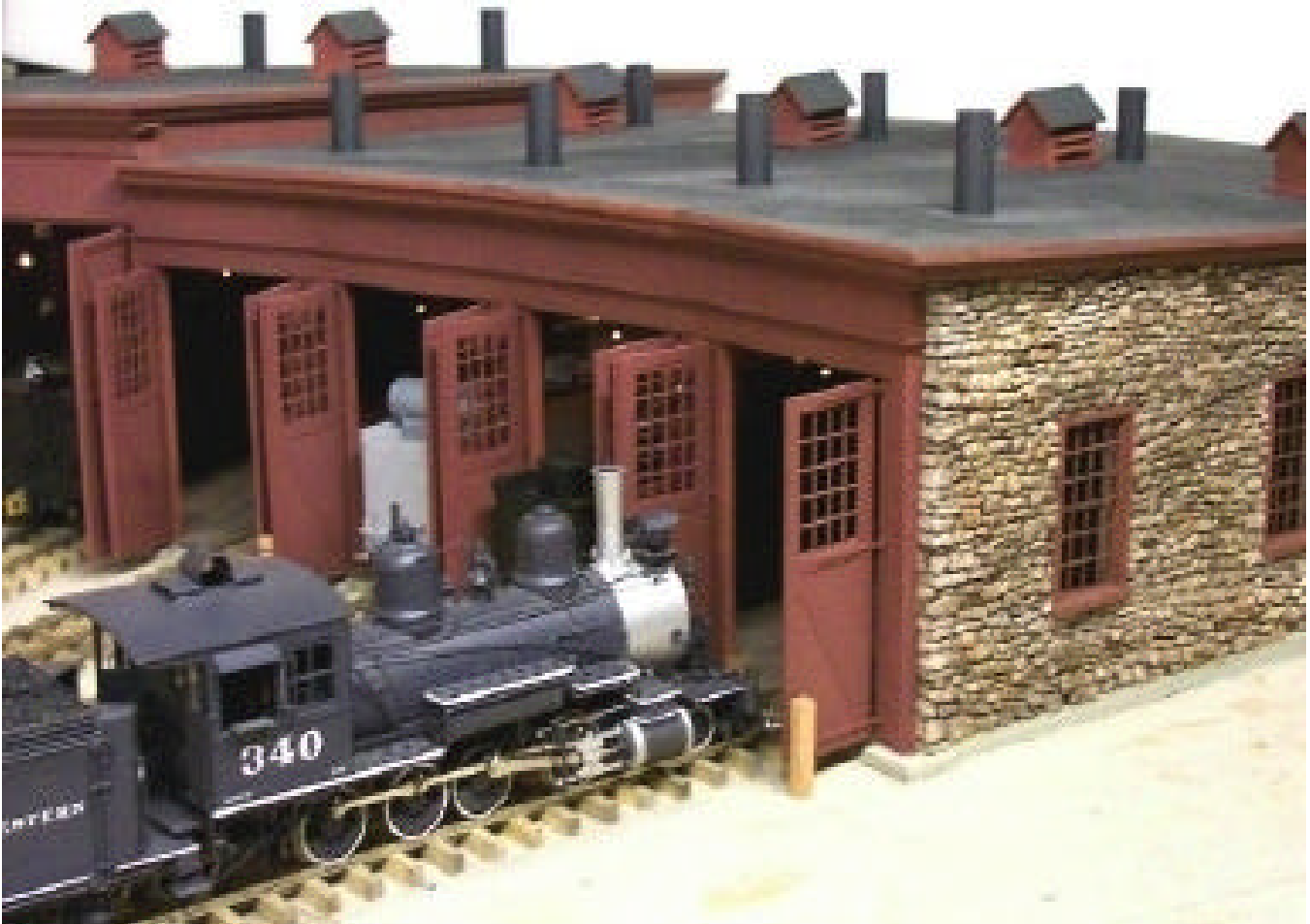
Rochester Model Rails

Dedicated to quality model railroading in upstate New York

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**Model Railways
ScRRatch Stuff
Wood Outhouse Kit**

by Dick Senges

**Product
Review**

I always like to read the Model Expo Inc. catalog even though it has a lot of planes, cars, and boats. It does contain some model railroad kits, scenery and tools which are fun to read about.

On page 15 of their Rail Sale II catalog, they advertise Model Railways ScRRatch Stuff – easy to build mini-kits and ready to use accessories. These little kits or parts are only \$1.35 on sale this spring (regularly \$2.69). The HO scale kit that looked like it would fit my layout was the Wood Outhouse, a laser-cut wood kit No. MR6009. I ordered three of these kits through their Internet site (www.modelexpo-online.com/fbaa) and received an extra 5% discount.

The kit is laser-cut wood, contains 12 parts including a door with a laser-cut half moon. First I opened the kit, read the directions, and then proceeded to cut the wood parts from the 0.035" laser-cut wood sheet. I then sanded the edges of the wood parts and stained all the wood on both sides with a mixture of black leather dye and denatured alcohol. I did both sides to minimize warping.

Then I followed the assembly instructions. Of course, as in many kits, there are some glitches. First, the door framing material appears to be too short, i.e., it does not extend all the way down to the bottom of the door. Also, the door appears to be too tall, more like 7 plus feet rather than a 6' 8" door. These two problems were solved later by sanding the bottom of the assembled structure so that the whole building and door

are not as tall, and the molding extends down to the bottom of the door.

Another issue is that the wood parts contain front corner posts but there is no mention of these parts in the drawings or the instructions. Not to worry. I omitted these in the first model but included them in the second and third model. Works either way.

The other concern is the roof material is 0.035" thick. For the first model, I followed the instructions and glued on the roof material. Then I covered it with 600-grit gray sandpaper simulating tarpaper. Looked OK and the thick roof material looks like the wood fascia.

The roof on the second model was made with 2" x 12" dimensional lumber that was glued as roof planking parallel to the front of the structure. Six boards were used. On the third model, five 2" x 12" roof boards were laid from front to back with four 1" x 2" batten strips over the cracks in the larger roof planks.

Before gluing on the roof, the top of the structure was sanded smooth so that the roof fit was tight. Also, simulated nails were added to the door framing using a small biology probe (needle on a stick).

All in all, the three wood outhouses look very realistic and cute. Not bad for a \$3.85 expenditure and a couple hours of work. Wood laser kits are easy to build and look great when finished.

Protolancing and Proto-Freelancing

by George Irwin

As described by Verne Niner, writing in the March/April 2003 issue of N Scale Railroading, protolancing is “modeling a specific prototype with a touch of creative license thrown in.” Verne, an accomplished N Scaler, models the Santa Fe in the early 1950's but has moved the 2-8-8-2s the ATSF bought from Raton Pass, New Mexico, to his model pike's “location” in Arizona. Verne can use all of the documentation that is available on the Santa Fe but can also adopt it to fit the layout he'd really like to have, and the limitations of what is available in his chosen scale.

My own view of “protolancing” might be more properly called “proto-freelancing.” I define it as adopting the practices of a prototype railroad to a model line, real or imagined. For example, the Reid Brothers' Cumberland Valley System, one of the most famous N Scale layouts in the hobby, draws from the Pennsylvania, Western Maryland, Reading and Norfolk and Western. Although it's actually none of these actual lines, it “looks” like it is given the Reids' careful choice of locomotives, rolling stock and scenic treatments.

Another famous example of modeling from a historical perspective is the New England, Berkshire and Western club layout on the campus of RPI in Troy, New York. The line borrows from the history of the Delaware and Hudson, Rutland and New York Central railroads, and follows right along with these prototypes in many areas, right down to the type and quantity of freight carried, although proportionally scaled down to fit the size of the line. (Even when you have an area of 33 by 124 feet for a layout, you've got to make some compromises.) The RPI group has turned much more toward exact historical modeling in recent years, including a precise replica of the area around the Union Station in Troy, but even when they were more of a “freelance” group inputs like D&H timetables, Rutland steam locomotive rosters, and NYC milk train regulations were being utilized.

To get started in “protolancing” it's helpful to do some research to find some areas of interest. A short list of sources may include:

- Books on the subject, not just the railroad but also the locale in which it operated.
- Magazine articles, which can be researched on the Internet at <http://index.mrmag.com> .
- Official railroad documentation such as employee timetables and rulebooks. Sometimes information like freight traffic studies have survived; RPI has done a wonderful job of capturing and reprinting a great deal of this data for the D&H.

- Railroad historical societies, both specific and general.
- Special interest groups and discussion lists on the Internet.
- Other Internet resources such as personal websites.
- Newspaper articles from the time period of interest. Libraries are great sources for microfilm collections; a big railroad employer surely made the local newspaper often.
- First hand accounts from current and former employees.

As part of my own model railroading I have crafted a “history” of my Wilmington and New York Railway (N Scale). Think about the “history” of your line or the branch of the prototype you are following. What were the key locomotives assigned there? What was a typical train like? Was there passenger service and when? Was the industry base growing, constant or in decline? What was the competition like (other railroads and other forms of transportation)? If you start to answer these questions, you could be on your way to “protolancing.” Enjoy!

Photo Tips

Are your slides or prints fuzzy or not very sharp? A solid support for the camera such as a tripod or a monopod will eliminate most of the unwanted camera motion during exposure. The results will be sharper pictures.



Editor's Note:
Don't forget to see the article in the
June issue of
Railroad Model Craftsman magazine -
**Sound Modules on the
Oil Creek Rail Road**
By Dick Senges

Reminisces

Rail & Road That Was

By Frank Smith

"All aboard", the conductor called. The railroad I remember was the New York, Ontario & Western and the station was Cooks Falls, New York. This was the town in which I spent the first seventeen years of my life and my family over one hundred years. The town was not always called Cooks Falls. It was settled after the revolution and was named Butternut Grove because of the large number of butternut trees.

Cooks Falls is located in Delaware County on the Beaverkill River. Timbering and trapping were the first attractions. [Ed. – See **RMR** October 2002 Issue #3 for the article on Frank's grandfather's logging railroad – The Russell Brook Railroad.] When the railroad arrived, the station stop was Cooks Falls which caused a lot of confusion with the post office called Butternut Grove. This was changed so the town became Cooks Falls.

The town was connected to three transportation avenues, the Beaverkill River used for rafting (long before my time), highway Route 4 (later Route 17) and the railroad. While I was growing up the most important means of transportation and communication was the railroad, with its passenger service, freight, milk, mail and Western Union. My mother rode the railroad to high school and college and I rode once a week to Roscoe, the next town, for my music lessons.

The O&W, dubbed the "Old and Weary," was a very important part of the community. Originally a single track line at the opening of the Scranton branch in the early 1890s, it became a double track in 1903 with the

increase in coal traffic from Pennsylvania to the New York City area. The track was laid at a 70 foot grade to the mile which allowed the standard 60 ton engine to pull 530 tons. The heavy demand for coal required the development of a 100 ton locomotive which could pull 900 tons on the same grade.

The main line was a straight one-mile run with curves on each end with a depot and water tower in the middle. A long siding for the loading of blue flagstone, lumber and the unloading of coal and freight was located to one side of the main track. The town had two general stores (horseshoes to bananas), hotels, creamery, blue stone dock, coal & feed shed, local school (two rooms 1st through 8th), blacksmith shop, saw mill, dye works, water wheel electric plant, railroad line shack, quarries, saw mills, logging and families.

The stage is now set for my next article on how the railroad influenced the life of the youth of the town.



O. & W. Station and Business Section, Cooks Falls, N.Y.



Ask Doctor Dick (The Scenery Doctor)

John writes:

I am trying to make rock castings for my HO scale layout and I am not sure what kind of plaster to use. What do you suggest?

Doc:

Well to start let's go over the various kinds of plaster commonly used on layouts and the pros and cons of each.

Hydrocal

This is a very hard plaster that is best used to make the scenic form, either over screen, corrugated strips, or foam. It has a very short curing time and some people find it hard to work with.

It is inexpensive though, only about \$22.00 per 100 pound bag in Fairport, NY. I have found it is the best used for making mountains on your layout due to its strength, but is too hard to be used for rock castings.

Molding Plaster

This material is similar to the above, but softer. It is priced about the same, \$12.00 for 50 pounds in Fairport, NY.

It is not as strong as *Hydrocal* but it takes an acrylic wash much better than the *Hydrocal*, thus good for rock

castings. Its curing time is slightly longer than *Hydrocal*.

Sculptamold

This is a nice material to work with for making contours and filling in around rock castings. It is a mixture of paper mache and plaster and has a somewhat bumpy finish when dry.

It is expensive relative to *Hydrocal*, about \$38.00 for 25 pounds at the English Model Railroad shop in Montoursville, PA.

You can mix this stuff relatively dry, form a ball in your hand, and place the material exactly where you want it to go.

GOOP

This material is a mixture of brown latex paint, white glue, Perma-Scene (a vermiculite type material) and Celluclay (a paper mache material).

It has a very long working time, is relatively thick like peanut butter, and is best used for making the scenic forms.

The long working time is great since you can take your time in doing the scenery and you can also apply groundcover and plant your trees while it is still wet.

Making N Scale Corrugated Roofing

by Jeff Ornt

I make corrugated roof panels in N scale from the heavy foil that pie pans are made from. To do this I made a form from a 1"x 2" piece of .060" styrene and glued a piece of .060" square stock down the middle across the short dimension. Then I cut enough 1" long .035" evergreen rod to make an undulating surface on one side of the fence about 5 scale feet wide. Make sure the strips are all nice and tight together and parallel or the error will really stand out.

Then I cut foil sheets about a scale 4 x 8 feet and slide them against the fence. Holding one side down I burnish the foil to the form with a Q-tip or a very short hard stump brush. Someone mentioned balsa wood. That might work great if you used the end of a 1/2" square by 3" stump and crushed to the form. It takes a lot of force but we don't want the pattern to be too fragile! When you see the pattern nice and clear and even, turn it and do the other half.

I then glue the panels to a folded and cut-to-fit styrene flat black painted roof. I lay them like shingles and trim the edges. Then I weather under the edges at least to show a bit of shadow where the panels overlap and the weather to your hearts content.

I know this sounds like a lot of work but you only have to make the mold once and the results are perfect N scale corrugated roofs.

Rochester Model Rails

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National Railway Historical Society Holds Summer Meetings

The Rochester Chapter of the NRHS would like to invite all area model railroad clubs to be their guests at one or all of their operational meetings in June, July, or August 2003.

The chapter meets at the Industry Depot, Rt. 251 and the LA&L tracks at 7:00pm on June 19, July 18, and August 21. Our guests are welcome to ride the locomotives and cabooses with us and also view the museum's collection and facilities. Operations usually cease about dark. There is no charge.

For reservations, contact Harold Russell at 585-427-9159 or e-mail at: haroldrussell@juno.com, or visit www.rochnrhs.org for more info.

Coming Events

MAY 2003

- 3** **Burlington, NY** – International Division Meet, layout tours meet, Fee - \$2.00 for NMRA members, and \$4.000 for non-members, Info: Chuck Faist at Faist@hwcn.org
- 15:** **Rochester, NY** – National Railway Historical Society, Rochester Chapter meeting 40&8 Club, University Avenue 7:00pm, Free
- 25:** **Rochester, NY** – TTOS N E Division Toy Train Show and Swap Meet, Logan's Party House 1420 Scottsville Road, 9:00am – 2:00pm, \$4.00, age 6 – 16 \$1.00, under 6 free. For more info contact: Holger Krogemann at 315-597-0287.

JUNE 2003

- 7:** **Syracuse, NY** - Trains in the Garden, Garden Railway Tours, Route 31 & Henry Clay Blvd. Info: Don Weeks 315-625-4380
- 20-22:** **Utica, NY** - Thomas the Tank Engine day , Adirondack Scenic Railroad
- 21-22:** **Timonium, MD** – Great Scale Model Train Show & All-American Hi-Rail & Collectors Show

JULY 2003

- 13 – 19:** **Toronto, Canada** - NMRA National Convention, Mapleleaf 2003, Contact; www.ml2003.com or e-mail to: registrar@ml2003.com Over 200 clinics and 150 layout tours
- 21-22:** **Timonium, MD** – Great Scale Model Train Show & All-American Hi-Rail & Collectors Show