

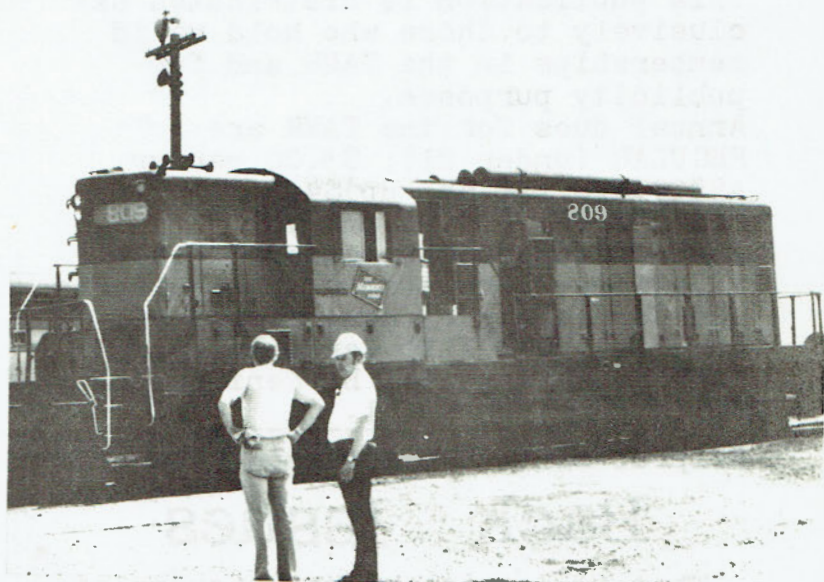


HOTBOX

"the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1979

NO. 157



A Last LOOK



The TAMR HOTBOX is the official publication of the TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADING and it is issued every other month with an additional special mailing of a member Directory once a year.

The TAMR HOTBOX presumes that all material submitted for possible publication is submitted gratis and must be received by the editors of the TAMR HOTBOX by the first of the month of the issue (i.e. for May/June issue, material must be received by May 1st).

This publication is distributed exclusively to those who hold valid memberships in the TAMR and for publicity purposes.

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Please address all membership applications, renewals, address changes and complaints of non-receipt of the TAMR HOTBOX to Gerry Dobey, TAMR Secretary, 145 E. Kenilworth, Villa Park, IL 60181.

Helpful Hint: Don Peterson

Back Issues

What to do with my back issues of the TAMR HOTBOX was a problem. Having been a member of the TAMR for four years, I had accumulated enough of them that I had to do something besides throw them into a couple (at least) stacks in a soon-to-be-forgotten place.

One day a few months ago, I was looking through a box of stuff that my mom brought home and I noticed several three ring binders. Then it hit me! Put the HOTBOX's, DAYLIGHT's, WAYFREIGHT's, etc. in a binder. Brilliant! So I got out a hole punch, punched away and now I have a nice reference collection.

I urge everyone who has been wondering what to do with all their back issues to do what I did. Lastly, a word about order: I place the current Directory first, then I place the HOTBOX's in month and year order with each year's Directory proceeding each year's set. After the HOTBOX's come regional newsletters which are again placed in month and year order.

Pecatonica and Pontiac R.R.
"Route of the Tolling Bell"

N
Scale



Passes
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Mark Kaszniak, President
4818 W. George Street
Chicago, IL 60641

FOR SALE: Crane, 5 boxcars, flatcar and an AHM SW1 (powered). All HO. Send first-class stamp to: Ed Luzine, Jr., P.O. box 22, Gunderland, New York 12084.

PASS EXCHANGE: John Huey

Here's this issue's listing:

Steve Boivin
111 North Street
Granby, MA 01033

Kevin Garrett
4050 North Drive
Pueblo, CO 81008

TRAIN ORDERS

TRAIN ORDERS is a letters column in the TAMR HOTBOX where you can express your views on the TAMR, its publications and its officers. All letters for this column are to be sent to the Editor of the TAMR HOTBOX.

In regard to the question posed on the cover of the last HOTBOX. No! These people are obviously shady characters and should be arrested for plotting to steal an EMD cab unit under the aliases of TAMR members.

--Fred LeSage

Wanted: old Lionel trains before 1969. Engines, Operating cars, cars, track switches, accessories, old catalogs, etc. ORIGINAL ONLY, no reproductions please. Bryan Fisk, Box 35A, R.D.#1, Wyalusing, PA 18853

The Tehachapi Story

Tehachapi Loop--no two words say railroad to a Westerner like those two. When William Hood built the line, a line that looks almost like a bunch of snakes in a bowl, he made, not only one of the greatest single engineering feats in transportation, but also a true haven for the American railfan as well.

For those who have never been to this part of the country, the rail line is nearly straight as you leave Bakersfield, CA (see map). Then it runs up towards the Tehachapi Mountains on a very mild grade, nothing compared to what is in store just a few miles ahead. At Caliente, a hefty 2.52% grade becomes standard and it takes 23 miles to make the 900 foot gain between the Bakersfield SP yard and Caliente. Now that the loop is only 16 miles away, the tracks will have to climb another 1,760 feet of tought, twisting high desert mountain sides to reach it and as far as the hard climb goes that is only a little bit better than halfway; after the loop, you must climb to Summit which is 3,628 feet above sea level. All things considered--that is a lot of work for a diesel engine. When the Southern Pacific runs a long drag uphill, they usually spend a lot of time running the ammeter in the yellow zone, but they almost always make it before the overload becomes critical. This is also, as you've probably guessed, six motor country dominated by SD45's, T2's and SD40-2's for the SP with Santa Fe using almost anything from GP30's to its big dash two's.

My first trip to the area was way back in 1974 (way back?), I'd read about the area via a Rail Classics story. I've always loved the Espee and decided to get up there, but how? My Nova wouldn't do it, or would it? I borrowed my dad's camera and got a few things piled in the back seat. I even brought an extra roll of film and that gave me 24 pictures...Wow! I eased behind the wheel of my rolling blue junk heap with the piece of mind of "What could go wrong?" or "What, me worry?", might be a better way to put it. After all the

worst thing that could happen was my car blowing up, but this never happened--at least not on this trip!

Yet enough of such trivia, back to the subject at hand. Have you ever heard four or five 3600hp SD45's in Run 8 at 20 mph? The decible count is incredible, to say the least! (AE: I always knew railfanning could make you deaf!) Then if you are in the same rock cut with these engines, the vibrations actually hinders your breathing capability--this I learned within ten minutes of my arrival.

Wear and tear on the tracks is also quite evident and the SP replaces 90% of the rail every two years or so. Due to all the tight curvature on this line, welded rail is not practicable. Standard length sections start near Caliente and continue past Cable.

From a railfan's point of view, the loop is only one in a series of good photo locations. The area is crisscrossed with paved and dirt roads that get you anywhere you need to go. Just be careful, this is rattle-snake country and anyone who doesn't think so can see my latest trip films. In fact, a friend and I caught one and later returned it to its den, about 30 feet from trackside. We fed him a few field mice and set him next to our cars to sun himself. I must thank him, he helped us keep our privacy and in fact he was so stuffed (with mice) that he was almost friendly. However, I must add that my friend was a semi-professional reptile handler, he used to "milk" cobras, so he knows what to do--don't play with fire. Suffice to say, this isn't your local park; it, for the most part, is wilderness--treat it as such.

Over the years, the line had its share of problems. Floods, wrecks and earthquakes. If you can picture it: hills appeared, tunnels shrunk and in one case, an entire mountain was lifted into the air as the ground beneath it shrunk causing the rails in the tunnel to "disappear" into a rock wall only to emerge a few yards away. In tunnel #4, to this day, you can touch the ceiling without even stretching (cont'd page 5)

4

To BAKERSFIELD

ILLMON

1/2

CALIENTE-BODDISH ROAD

CALIENTE

To 58

2

BEALVILLE

3

4

5

CLIFF

6

7

8

ROWEN

To BAKERSFIELD

Highway 58

KEENE

WOODFORD

CALIENTE

CREEK

Woodford-Tehachapi Road

THE LOOP

9

WALONG

MONUMENT

10

MARCEL

11

To SUMMIT

To TEHACHAPI AND MOUNTAINS

LEGEND

RAILROAD

TUNNEL

Highway

DIRT ROAD

NOT TO SCALE

Tehachapi Loop AND SURROUNDING AREA

DWG. BY J. KOBRINETZ

TAMR HOTBOX

Tehachapi Loop (cont'd)

The land is as unpredictable as the trackage is curved, but all the problems have left the area a ruggedly beautiful retreat for the Tehachapi railfan.



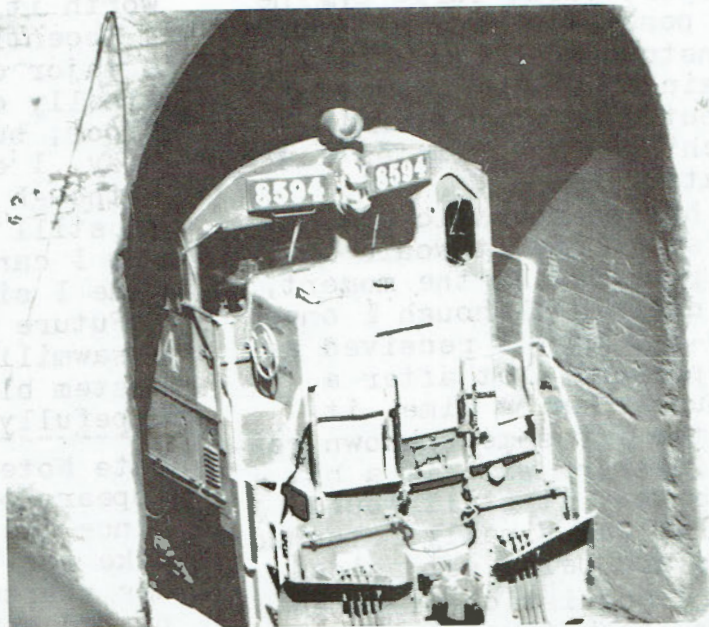
(Top) Santa Fe SD45-2 leading a heavy eastbound. There are four more units mid-train plus a lone SD45 behind the caboose. This shot was taken at Cable siding, just east of Marcel

(Middle) SP #8494, an SD40T-2 leads a long westbound out of tunnel number ten towards the loop.

(Bottom) SP #8594, a GE U33C pops out of tunnel #9 at the loop. In a few moments, this engine will cross over the rest of the train just in front of the helper engines.

ALL photos: John Huey

September/October 1979



Point Comfort & Northern RR

Having been a model railroader for 3 years, I now consider myself a serious modeler. In the past three years, I have made three attempts at building a layout--all of them were unsuccessful. Lack of money and space were the main problems, but after acquiring a spare room and enough lumber and track to get me going, I am off to a good start. Once I had used up a year's supply of paper and pencils, I finally decided on a trackplan. Actually it's a very simple plan, but it has some very good operating possibilities and that is exactly what I wanted. In the preceding layouts, I think I tried to make the plan too big or complicated for the money and experience I possessed.

The long spur that runs parallel with one curve was once a passing siding, but it was removed and an extra track added to accomodate the ice house. The extra switches were then used for the engine facilities. With the removal of the passing siding so went any possibilities for two train operation; however, since I'm interested in retaining this feature, I searched for a way to expand the layout. I found the perfect place for my needs--the sawmill spur. If the whole spur, including the sawmill, is raised and track is continued over the main, a drop leaf section could be added on which a spur, yard, large engine facility or possibly even a loop could be constructed. Thus I could have two train operation, maybe not continous, but with good planning a ton of switching possibilities could be incorporated.

My layout has no specific era, but if I had to state one it would be 1950 to the present. At the moment, I have only diesels although I once had a Tyco 0-8-0 that I received as a Christmas present. Yet after a couple of hours running time, it decided to stop for some unknown reason. After tinkering with it a bit and praying a lot, it still would not budge so it was finally returned and the funds are being set aside for the future acquisition of a new or used steam locomotive.

I am primarily interested in logging railroads, but on my first permanent railroad, I decided to combine a variety. As you can see from the trackplan (next page), there are many different types of industries: a sawmill, brewery, icehouse, etc. Furthermore, all of these industries are in a sense related as the products produced by one industry are used by one or more of the other industries. For instance, the sawmill cuts wood and that wood is sent to the box factory for the production of boxes. The boxes, in turn, are then sent to the freight house for use in freight packing. This chain is most helpful in developing prototype operation on a model railroad.

Most of my structures are of the craftsman type; Fine Scale Minatures and Suydam. My motive power and freight cars come mostly from Athearn and Roundhouse. Lately, I've been spending most of my time building scenery and buildings and thus my equipment roster has been neglected. For example, the only passenger cars I have for my PA1 are of the 1890's era. See what I mean!

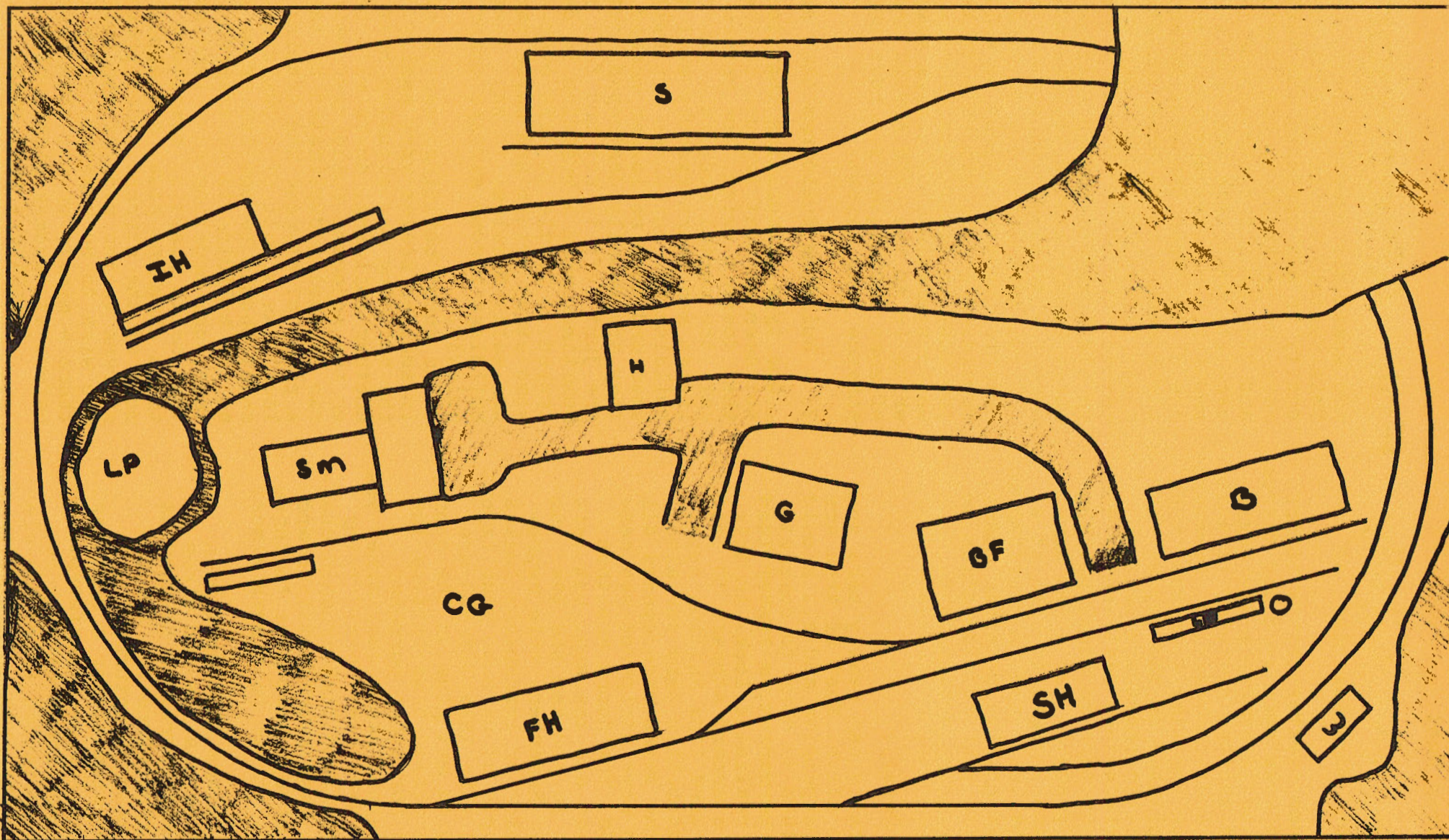
A suggestion to those of you who are new in the hobby--Spend a little more money and buy a good power pack than spend a little for a cheap one and unreliable operation. I use a Troller Transistor Two for which I paid around \$40, but it was well worth it in my opinion.

Recently, the PC&N went through a major change. The layout was originally constructed 48" off the floor, but because I'm naturally lazy, I decided to lower it to 38". Although it was not lowered too much, it still makes a world of difference; now I can sit or stand--most of the time I sit!

Future plans for the PC&N include a sawmill addition, better electrical system blocks, signals, etc..., and hopefully someday finished!

Late Note: A trackplan of the PC&N appears on the next page; however, since the article was written Glenn's pike has been dismantled. Yet work has started on a new PC&N to be completed some time in the future.

POINT COMFORT AND NORTHERN MODEL RAILROAD



Legend:

S - Station
 IH - Ice House
 LP - Log Pond
 SM - Saw Mill
 H - Hotel

G - Garage
 CG - Cattle Grazing
 FH - Freight House
 BF - Box Factory
 B - Brewery

Trackplan drawn by Glenn Vallantyne

SH - Sand House
 LD - Loading Dock
 W - Water

On A Chilly Fall Afternoon

Introduction: Mark Kaszniak, AE

During Autumn, leaves change colors, the wind becomes more cold and fierce and school bells announce the beginning of yet another semester of what seems like endless learning. However, this is also the time when most work gets accomplished on the layout. The days become too short and cold to get any satisfactory railfanning done so most of us turn to modeling. Your pike could probably use a few more additions and changes to make it a bit more realistic and interesting so here we present five possible modeling ideas for your consideration on those cold, crisp autumn days.

1) - Small Details

Small details can really make your layout come alive. Most of them are easy and inexpensive and all should take less than an hour to complete.

Although permanent, a lumber load has a nice realistic look. In this project, a standard Athearn 50 foot boxcar was used (the Railbox type, although automobile cars can also be used). The doors were opened all the way and some stripwood was cemented inside. The doors are then closed almost all the way, but left open enough so you can see the "lumber" inside. Remember, this represents a broken or improperly locked door. A couple of cars on your layout should look like this. If you are careful not to get glue on the doors, they may be closed thus letting the car be used for other purposes.

If your layout has a coal mine, you may want to have some "coal" lying around. I've found that crushed charcoal is the best representation and if secured with 1 part glue to three parts water, it can be placed almost anywhere.

Old spark plugs that have been painted and have a few odd wires glued here and there can be used as engines or generators for the interiors of your structures.

If you are stumped for a flat car load, you can follow a prototypic practice. Since loads have to be secured and protected (from the elements and prying eyes), tarpaulins

are sometimes used to cover them. This feature can be modeled quite easily in any scale as the basic form can be built up with stripwood and then an old cloth can be laid over it. Next take the glue solution mentioned earlier and put this on the cloth. When the glue dries, the cloth should be painted and should also stiffen up. If you use oil base paints, the cloth (I used a piece of an old T shirt) should stiffen even more. Cables should then be attached over the tarpaulin to secure the load.

These techniques can be used to brighten up your layout as well as providing little projects to keep you busy in between major ones. I would appreciate if others would write in to the TAMR HOTBOX and tell of some techniques you have used to enhance your layout.

2) - Building Buildings that Aren't

One type of building that is usually not seen on most layouts is the one that doesn't exist. Now before you call the mental hospital, you'd better listen and learn exactly what this building is. Buildings are built, used and then no longer needed. Then they are usually destroyed, but some are just left to rot and fall apart. Sometimes when a building is destroyed, a little is left over--a base, some stray bricks and maybe part of one wall. Needless to say, these non-buildings become garbage dumps very quickly.

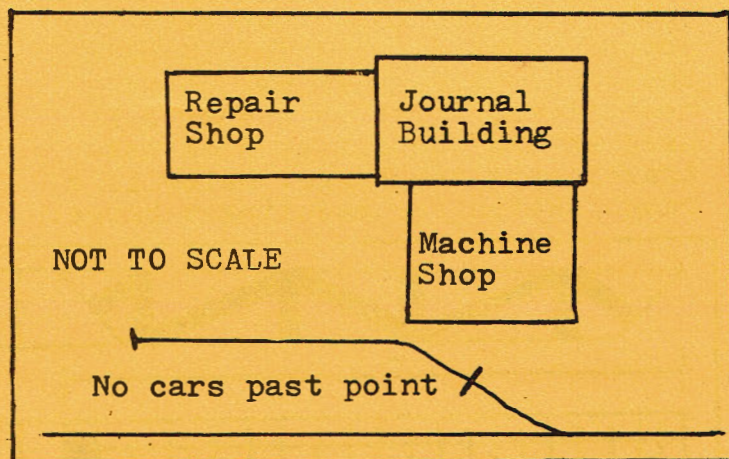
The ghost buildings can be simulated in smaller scales very easily. If the building was situated next to another building, scars will be left on the adjacent buildings' walls. This can be easily duplicated by taking a piece of styrene and shaping it to look like a wall of a building. The sheet should be smaller or as large as the building to be scarred. Next take some modeling glue (the stuff that melts plastic, sometimes referred to as airplane glue) and apply it to most of the styrene. Then press the styrene to the side of the building you wish to be scarred, leave it there a minute or so, then remove it before it becomes permanently

(continued next page)

attached. The residue left by the bonding looks a lot like the roughness of an old building that was attached, but torn down. This section should be heavily weathered to complete the project.

Another way to represent these non-buildings is to take the bases provided with plastic kits and add a few bricks to represent the old hacked out sides. Add weeds and other "junk" and maybe a few bums and drunks and pretty soon you have your own model slum.

3) - Making and Switching the Dobey Furniture Factory



The buildings I used to make the factory are ones that I already had on my layout and you probably have too. If you don't, these buildings can be readily purchased from AHM or Tyco. I used the Journal building, Repair shop and the Machine Shop for this project. If you desire, the Gruesome Casket Co. can be substituted for the Journal and Machine Shop. In fact, I would recommend doing this as the Casket Co. has more of an industry look as well as more details.

The conversion is easy with the hardest part being the removal of the buildings' bases that I had glued on previously. This step must not be rushed as the walls of the buildings could easily break. Then, the windows and doors from the front of the Journal building were removed as they would not be seen. These were placed in the scrap box to await a future scratchbuilding project. The roof of the repair shop was then altered slightly so that it would fit against the front of the Journal building. I covered the front of the

Journal building simply because it looked too much like a store front; thus the ends of the Journal building and Repair Shop were simply butted together, glued if you like, and placed on the layout. Because the side of the Journal building has a little corner brick work, the Machine Shop was placed against the building just inside of this (see drawing).

Weathering was easy, but I penciled then painted with oil paints the words "DOBEY FURNITURE FACTORY"; this was then slightly sanded to give the side an aged look. I used Polly S dust color to simulate the effects of rain washed down the side of the building.

On my layout, switching the Dobey Furniture Factory is easy, but the industry needs constant attention because the spur can only hold one car. Shipments of wood and fuel oil must be delivered so the company doesn't run out of materials, but loads of furniture waiting for shipment to Chicago can't sit in the supply building either. Hence no sales, no business, which leads to the fact that empties have to be timed just right. All this leads to some Wild and Crazy operating sessions.

4) - Making Roads

Highways contributed to the decline of the railroads, but even so roads ought to be modeled somewhat on your pike, at least enough for the townspeople to get across town! Most commonly built in the 1920's and 30's, most survived until the early 60's.

No special tools are needed to pour your own. Spackling plaster, black tempra powder, cinder ballast and water will be needed to mix. The mixing is done in a cheap plastic bowl with a plastic spoon. Concrete is made with this solution: 8 parts spackling plaster, 4 parts water and 1 part black tempra powder. Asphalt is made with 4 parts spackling plaster, 3 parts black tempra, 3 parts cinder ballast and 2 parts water.

Be sure to use spackling plaster because the others set too fast. Fine cinder ballast can be found under the Woodland Scenics brand name though any other type will work just as well. (cont'd next page)

(cont'd from page 9)

Before mixing and pouring, you must build some sort of form to contain the mixture until it dries. Simple forms can be made of cardboard and masking tape. The size of the forms can range greatly, you can make them as long as you want and as wide as you think they should be, mine were made just wide enough for two scale cars to pass. Care should be taken to make sure the tops are level and straight. My forms were about $3/8$ of an inch high, this made some thick roads, but I had ground material go up to it.

Mix one cup at a time and pour it into the forms. Always add dry plaster to water and work the mixture into the corners with the plastic spoon and puncture as many air bubbles as possible.

If you make concrete roads, let them dry then score them down the middle and into 20 scale foot sections to simulate expansion cracks. Use a lead pencil to make the cracks stand out. Spray a very thin coat of brown to simulate age and ground in dirt onto the highway then brush a thin trail down the center of each lane to simulate oil drippings from vehicles.

A gravel shoulder can be made from ballast, dirt and brown tempera mixed together and use a water-glue solution to hold this down. Main highway lanes are about ten feet wide and tar roads are about 17 feet over all. A possible alternative would be to have a construction crew pouring a new road into scale forms made out of wood. Yet don't go too far with your road building projects, after all I wouldn't want your railroad to go bankrupt!

5) - On the Waterfront

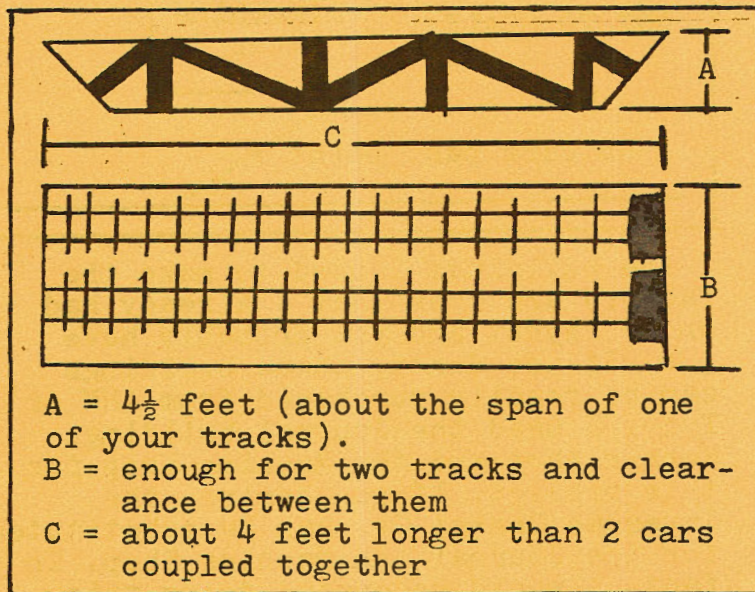
A real railroad needs some reason for existing. The careful use of tunnels and mountains may hide the fact that your models just run in circles, but we need something to help us believe that our model railroads are really doing something.

A dockside scene where railroads load incoming freight or empty loaded cars on barges can provide that link with the outside world we are seeking. The waterfront is usually crowded with industries that ship by both rail and water.

The waterfront is usually a good place for some extra switching and sandwiching it in a very tight place will also save some layout space.

Modern techniques allow us to use fiberglass resin and a catalyst or craft hobby's casting resin to make very realistic water. Campbell offers a series of wharf and dockside structures in HO and if these kits are too high priced, kits from Tyco or AHM can be utilized as well.

Most modelers like to include some type of barge or car ferry that will accept cars from the railroad. However, a barge facility needs a docking area and a loading ramp so it looks like the barge can move (it doesn't have to, but the illusion should be there). In switching operations, idler cars should be used so the locomotive does not travel onto the barge. Below is a rough sketch for modeling a barge:



Be careful that you do not create a toy-like setting that would have otherwise been correct if you had planned the scene properly. Take a look at a wharf or waterfront near your home if it is served by railroads or else go to the library or consult articles that have appeared in the model magazines.

A waterfront scene can add extra operation to your railroad as well as reinforcing the existence of your model railroad. Given it a try, you might be surprized.

Every member we get is an added car to our train, help promote the TAMR, contact the Secretary for details.

Getting to Know You--

Comment From A New Member

Hello, my name is JAMES MORGAN. I just joined the TAMR in January and I wanted to tell you a little bit about myself and the model railroad that I am building.

I first got interested in model railroading back in January of 1976 when my dad and I started our first railroad from three train sets. As you probably know, these sets have some good ol' 18" radius curves, 9" straight sections, a couple of re-railers and more locomotives and cars than there was track space for. The layout was started on the traditional 4x8' sheet of plywood, but the experience soon taught me that even this size (which seemed large in the beginning) was too small for what I wanted. Anyway, the plans for the layout were drawn up and it was to have two mainlines, three hills (I called them mountains, but actually, they were too small), a yard, two bridges, scenery and a well built control panel. Sound good? It did to me too, but to make an expensive as well as long story short, the table on which the track was to be laid was not built properly. When I started out, I knew nothing of L-girder benchwork, thus it was nearly impossible to build elevated trackage without cutting the table. So I settled for building it on thick pieces of balsawood raised from the table with pieces of lumber. This worked out alright, but the track crept because of the thinness of the balsawood and this meant derailments in the hills I built over the trackage.

However, there were numerous other mistakes as well; building tunnel portals too small for all equipment to pass through; using cork roadbed that became brittle and didn't hold the track ver well; using brass track and I won't begin to tell you the problems I had with switches! After a while, the layout became a source of physical and mental frustration. So I gave up on it awhile and after I moved to a new house, I began to wonder if it was fixable? I thought I'd give it a try, after all what did I have to lose except more money?

Well, you guessed it--that's what I lost. All the problems on the layout stemmed from the improperly con-

structed table frame which from moving and alterations now had a crack in it and was beginning to sag as well. I decided the layout was unsalvagable and proceeded to tear it down completely. This time I would start from scratch--complete new benchwork, a new size, a new trackplan, a new everything! I named my railroad the Manchester & Paradise or Ma & Pa for short. I am going to build this pike right if it takes me ten years to do it!

A whole new set of standards were adopted for the construction of my new layout: 22" radius curves, L-girder benchwork, Tru-Scale self guaging roadbed, handlaid rail and Tru-Scale high speed switch kits (I decided to use Tru-Scale because I believe they are the best track products on the market).

Construction has not actually begun on the Ma & Pa because there are still a few details to be worked out. I am a sort of perfectionist and like everything to be planned out in advance.

I am 15 years old now and all of this you have been reading has been going on for the past four years. Yet I don't consider those four years wasted for I have learned many things from books, back issues and current issues of the model magazines, I have learned the do's and don't's and as a result, I think my modeling skills have improved.

Well, I think I have taken enough of your time. I just wanted you to get to know me better and to tell you about some of the things I've experienced and learned. I will be writing future articles on the progress of the Ma & Pa which is a shortline set in the 1890's.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU: Any member, new or veteran, who has not already had his life story poured out to the world through the HOTBOX is invited to send an autobiography of about three paragraphs for publication. This is a reader oriented section and it depends on you for future support. In order to make the HOTBOX a more "Personalized" publication, we hope to include this column as often as there is material for it.

FRONT COVER: Because our national convention, "Rails are Fine '79", was such a success, we couldn't resist giving you one last look at some of the activities. Thus clockwise from upper left, (1) If you think your control panel is confusing, look what the Bensenville yardmaster on the Milwaukee Road has to contend with! Let's see, block power is the top row, switch machines come next,.... (2) Mr. John Hoker and Mr. Jim Scribbens engage in a lively conversation on the Milwaukee Road while #809 eavesdrops. Before you know it, highlights of the conversation will be broadcast all over the system! (3) Tom Gasior decides the shortest route to the South is to avoid New Jersey all together in a game of RAIL BARON; and (4) a rare photo of the Editor, Tim Vermande (left) and the Associate Editor, Mark Kaszniak (right) disagreeing on the proper place and angle for a shot of an oncoming train.

All photos: Gerry Dobey

MARKERS:

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: Jeff Wilke, our President, takes you back to those thrilling days of yesteryear when name passenger trains meant something more than just a name! J.S. Ward provides us with a report on Connells-ville yard, it may not be as big a Conway or Enola, but for motive power variety and action, there's no place like Connellsville. Finally, we continue the tradition started several years ago by once again presenting the HOTBOX Editors' Christmas Gifts to deserving members. All this and more will appear in the November/December Christmas issue of the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading.

THE EXTRA BOARD: Bryan Fisk would like to start a TAMR Convention Car Program in the TAMR. He says that if the program can get started, here's what TAMR members could expect: "The cars will have the TAMR and sponsoring Region's logo and date the convention was held." He also states that, if possible, they should be made in all scales. People interested in starting this program should contact: Bryan Fisk, Box 35A, RD#1, Wyalusing, PA 18853. In addition, it was pointed out to the HOTBOX Staff by the TAMR Secretary that our adoption of the title of "Safety Valve" for a letters column wasn't all that original as that is the title of a letters column in a national model railroad magazine (We knew we saw that name some where before!); therefore, effective immediately, the title of our letters column will be called TRAIN ORDERS. Boy is our face red!

TAMR HOTBOX, "Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"
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Villa Park, IL 60181

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