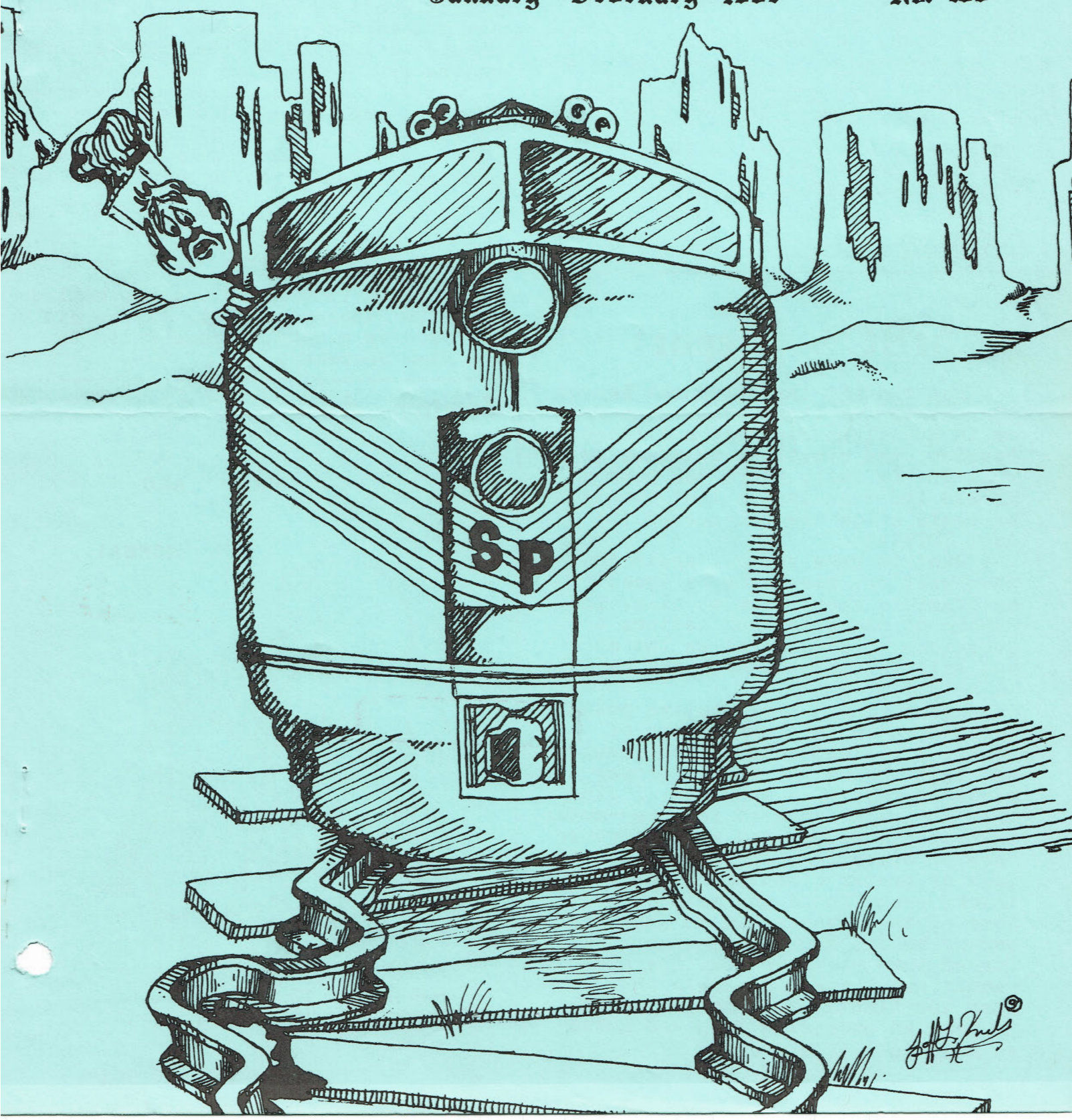


# HOTBOX

"the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"

January - February 1981

No. 165





# HOTBOX

## OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • Tern Association of Model Railroading

Issued every other month with an additional special mailing of a Directory of Membership during the summer.

Annual dues for the TAMR are as follows:

REGULAR (under 21 years of age): \$5.00

ASSOCIATE (21 years of age and up): \$4.50

SUSTAINING (both Regular & Associate): \$10.00

Please address all membership applications, renewals, address changes and complaints of non-receipt of the TAMR HOTBOX to the TAMR Secretary.

Gerry Dobey, TAMR Secretary  
145 E. Kenilworth Ave.  
Villa Park, IL 60181

All other HOTBOX business, except where specifically noted, is handled by the Editor. Please address all comments to the Editor.

**DEADLINE:** All material for publication must be submitted for consideration by the first day of the first month of the issue (i.e. for May/June issue, material must be received no later than May 1st). The TAMR HOTBOX assumes all material is contributed gratis and no payment will be made upon publication

Mark Kaszniak, HOTBOX Editor  
4818 W. George Street  
Chicago, IL 60641

The TAMR HOTBOX is distributed via third-class mail. If you'd like to receive it by first-class mail then please add two dollars to the Regular and Associate membership rates.

## MSC Report

I had thought that with the school year beginning there would be a let up in questions for help and ideas. However, the questions continue to roll in. In fact, there has been a marked increase in the last couple of weeks since the release of the last HOTBOX.

I want to urge you all again that when writing, please be as specific as possible about your problem. The number of pages to your letters or questions is immaterial as the more you tell me, the sooner I may be able to help you.

In repairing N scale motive power for others in the last couple of weeks, I noticed some common problems and felt this might be the proper place to pass on a few tips. I find that the main cause of failure--motor burnout--is associated with improper care in operation. In particular, the lack of proper cleaning of the pickup trucks seems to be the main culprit. Some of the diesels had so much lint packed behind the wheels that it was forced into the gear box. The end result was gears and wheels that turn too tightly causing the motor to bear an excessive load and subsequently burn itself out.

Another problem that I come in contact with is overoiling. Oil on the brushes and commutator will make them slide much easier, but oil is also a conductor which causes a short circuit all the way around the commutator causing the locomotive to produce much more heat than normal. The only oil that is needed is directly on the motor bearings and here only a little bit is required. You should use a needle to apply the oil and it should be applied on the OUTSIDE ends of the shaft--never on the inside.

That's it for this time and remember that the Member Services Committee is here to serve you. Thus if you have any questions on modeling or the prototype, feel free to send them in.

--Dee Gilbert

Please address all comments and questions on this column to Dee Gilbert, MSC Chairman, Box 132, Harrison, AK 92601.

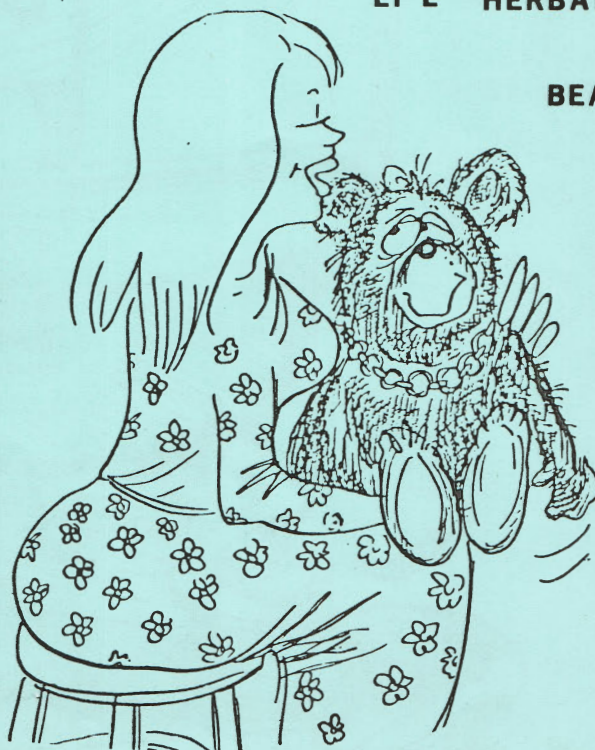
**NOTICE:** The 1980 DIRECTORY was mailed early in January of 1981. If you did not receive a copy, please write to the TAMR Secretary.

## Coming Soon:

MARY AND

LI'L HERBAL

BEAR





# THE BRUSHCUTTER

## HISTORY OF THE SAUGUS & PACIFIC

BY KEN KEELS

The nickname "brushcutter" was bestowed upon the railroad by the local residents because in some places the tracks run dangerously close to the hillsides. Let's explore the history of this very interesting little line.

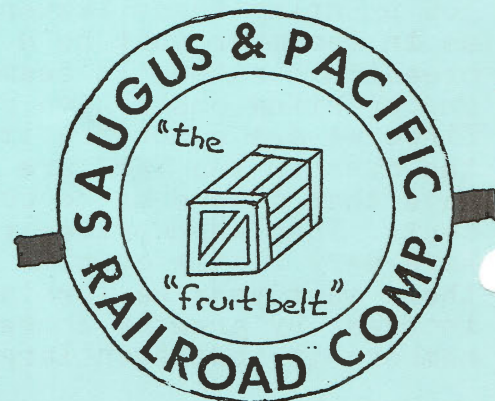
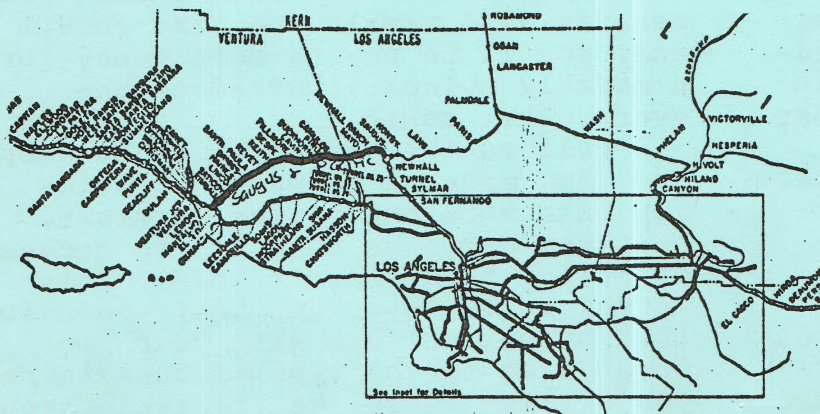
Originally, the Southern Pacific built the line to tap the fertile farm lands along the ocean as well as the many orange groves along its right-of-way. The railroad carried untold millions of dollars in citrus and other farm and orchard products eastward while it brought back vital supplies for the ranchers, early oil drillers and towns in the valley. When the Spreckels Company maintained sugar refining facilities at Oxnard, the railroad was busy in late summer and throughout the fall hauling trainloads of sugar beets grown in the great Central and San Joaquin valleys. Cattle was shipped from the Newhall Ranch as were petroleum distillates from the developing upper valley oil fields after their discovery in 1938.

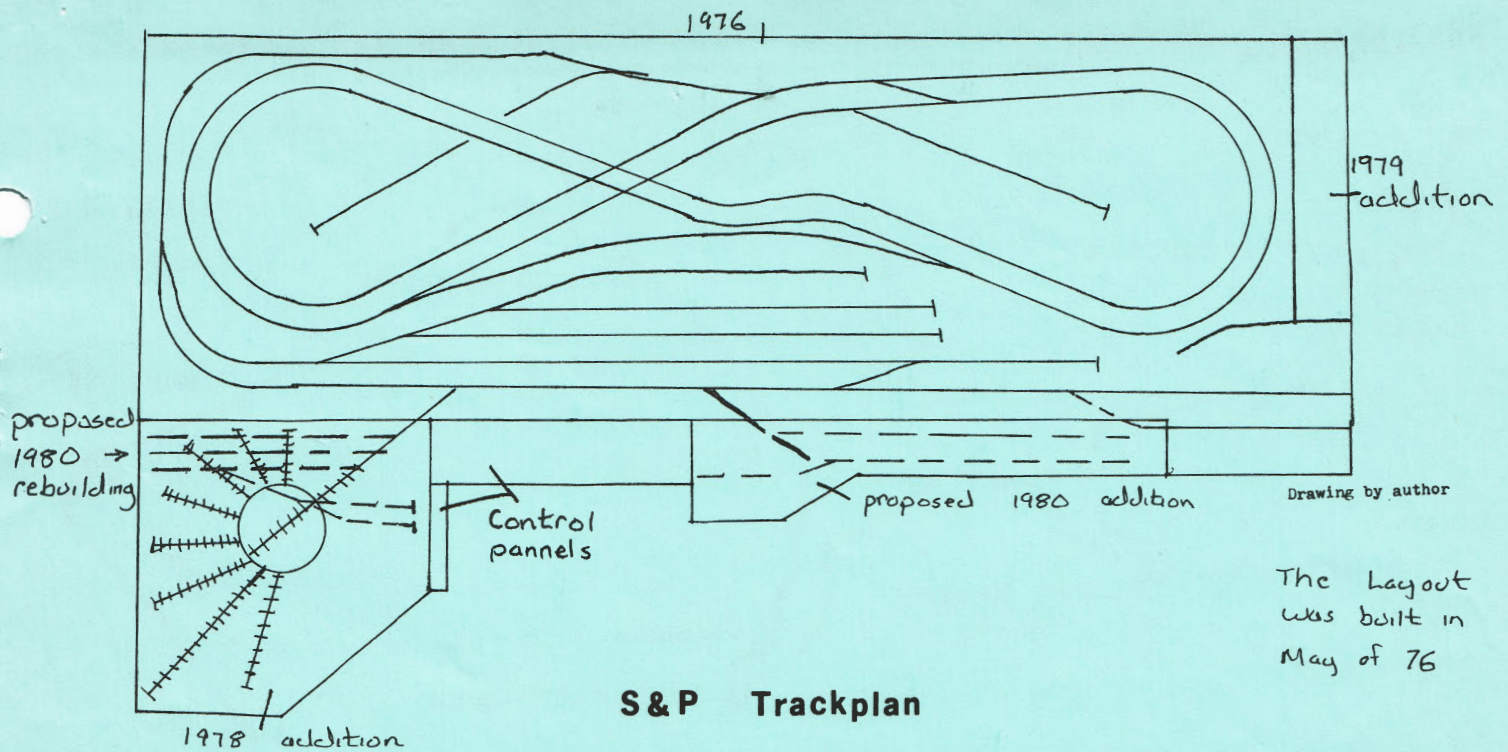
In 1887-1888, five hundred Chinese workers built the line between Saugus and Montalvo. At that time, it was the SP's mainline between Los Angeles and the coast. Later, the SP built another line through Chatsworth and this line became a branch. Regular

freight and passenger service was maintained, but the great Depression hit the line hard and passenger service was dropped in the mid-1920's. Yet it was only a matter of time before the line became a "streak of rust." Maintenance was kept up for awhile, but the eastern portion became choked with weeds. Later, a storm damaged a bridge and it was left unrepaired. Stations along the line began to close, the last one being the old station at Saugus which once presided over a busy railroad yard.

The scrap train was not far in the distance, but then on December 28, 1979, Kenneth Keels, a wealthy businessman, purchased the line. At once, upgrading began. A low nose GP9 was purchased from Chrome Crankshaft, lettered "Saugus & Pacific" and numbered 100. In addition, flat cars, boxcars and gondolas were purchased from the SP. Later, four passenger cars were also purchased from the SP. The equipment arrived on February 11, 1980. Meanwhile, he went about hiring employees and even managed to persuade the SP to repair that storm damaged bridge. On March 8, 1980, the general offices were opened and a special train was run for the employees and their friends.

However, the line still needed  
(cont'd next page)





### THE BRUSHCUTTER (cont'd from last page)

more motive power. So President Keels purchased an SW7 and TR6 from the SP. They went to work on April 21st numbered 101 and 102. On May 1st, the GP9 got tangled with a truck and was traded back to Chrome Crankshaft for another GP9 (#103).

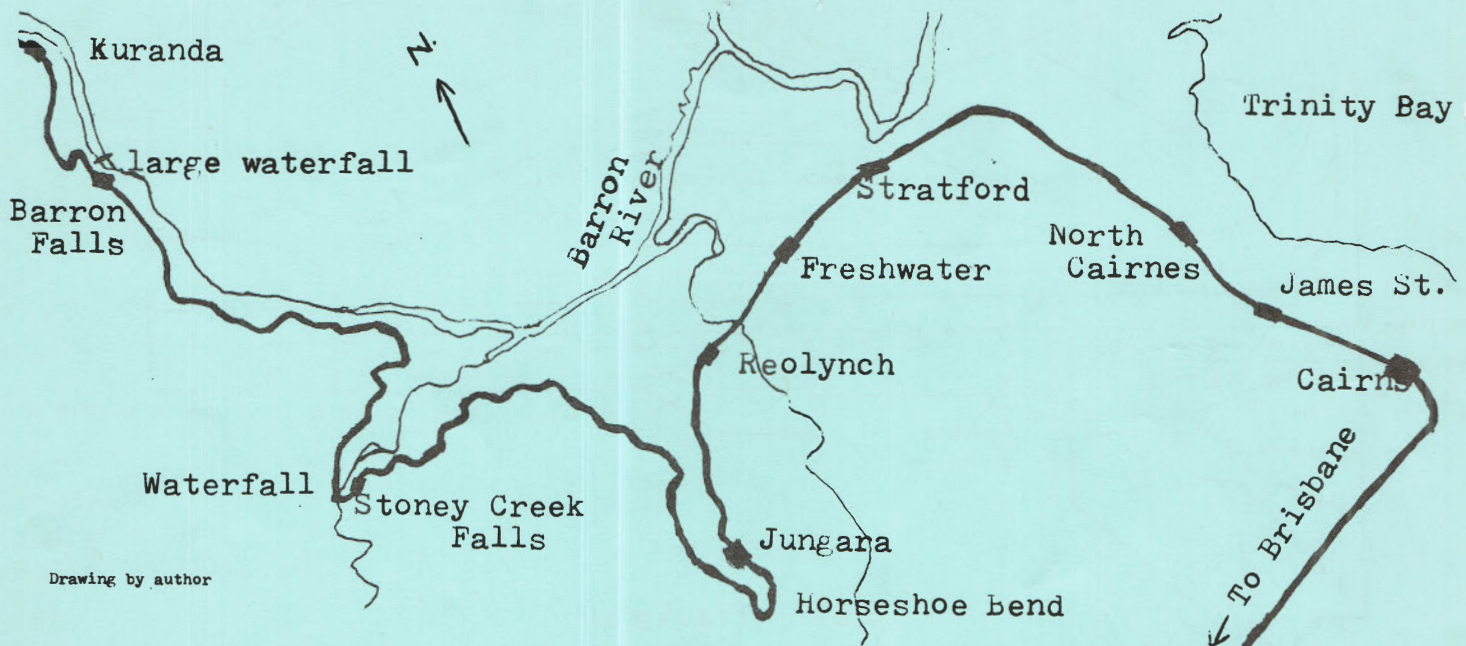
Now work shifted to upgrading the mainline and remainder of the physical plant. On weekends, the S&P would lease SP maintenance-of-way equipment and the remaining weekdays would be spent repairing the rest of the physical plant. On June 1st, the Santa Clarita Valley Railroad Historical Society was born. The society then moved the original Saugus station west of its original location to serve as its headquarters. The S&P allowed them to use their shops to repair old equipment and the society is now busy refurbishing an SP 10-wheeler that arrived on June 12th.

While work is proceeding on the railroad, the owner decided to look to the needs of its potential customers and as a result, 50 fifty foot outside braced boxcars were ordered and subsequently received on July 16th. With the growing piggyback shipments, the S&P decided to install intermodal facilities. The first will be located just east of the S&P's Saugus yard and will serve

the industrial areas of Saugus and the Valencia Industrial Park. Other such facilities will be located at Fillmore, Santa Paula and Montalvo. Furthermore, it is rumored that a new industry in the Valencia Industrial Park expects to ship some 400 to 500 cars a year via the S&P which will certainly improve the railroad's financial picture.

At present, negotiations are under way with the SP to purchase its Ojai branch along with the necessary trackage rights to serve it. Also, the S&P hopes to open several stations along its right-of-way for freight service or maybe local museums telling of the history of that particular town. These projects will supposedly be completed by 1985.

The future looks good for the S&P, so good that the owner, Ken Keels, had no trouble selling it to a business friend. At the moment, Mr. Keels is in Michigan starting up yet another railroad called the Michigan Southern. I'm sure you'll be hearing more about both in the not too distant future.



## KURANDA RAILWAY

Australia has an extensive network of railways covering a distance altogether of over 40,300 kilometers. Yet not all states have the same gauge. For example, New South Wales has a gauge of 1.435 m (4'-8½") while Victoria a gauge of 1.6 m (5'-3"). Therefore, any freight traveling from say Melbourne to Cairns would have to change twice. The railway that I'm going to describe is just north of Cairns and is also Australia's most northerly railway.

The railway runs from the far north Queensland town of Cairnes to Kuranda, a small town on the edge of the Ather-ton Tableland. The line is part of the Queensland Railway System and was built in the 1880's to service the tableland area. The total length of the line is 34 km, but the last 20 km feature the panoramic views, steep grades and tight turns along with 15 tunnels and numerous bridges to negotiate (ED: Kinda reminds me of some model layouts I've seen!).

The first part of the trip departing from Cairns is through some fairly flat terrain occupied mostly by cane fields which are served by their own operating tramways (2' gauge). However, once you pass Jungara station, the climb begins in earnest, starting

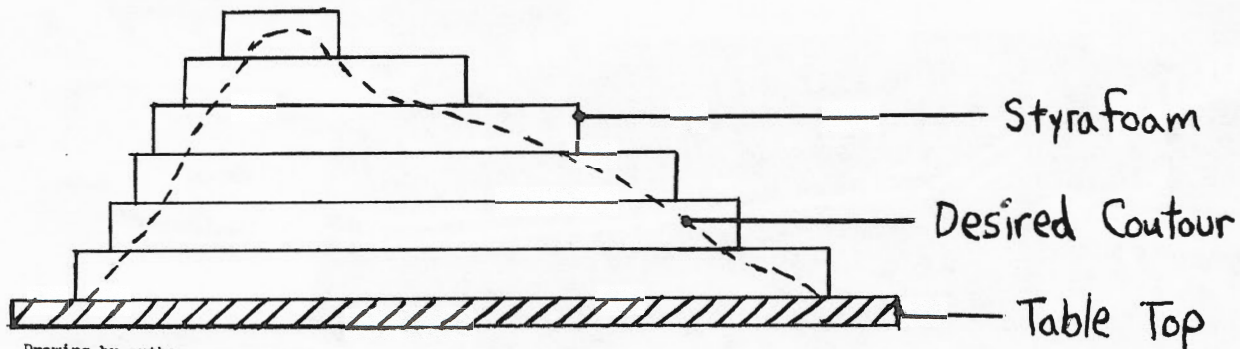
with a tight flange squealing around horseshoe bend and quickly followed by the first of the 15 tunnels.

Until we reach the Summit, the line is steeply graded and tightly winding and the slow speed of the train gives ample opportunity to admire the view which includes glimpses of Cairnes and Green Island. I say glimpses because during this section of the line we pass through some 13 tunnels.

After emerging from tunnel 13, a stop is made at Stoney Creek Station. This location is interesting because it has a crossing loop along with some steam watering facilities that are still in place.

Shortly after leaving the station, we span Stoney Creek Falls on a steel trestle and a few tunnels later emerge in the Barron River Gorge. The train provides some spectacular views of the river some 300 meters below. Next a short photo stop is made at Barron River Falls and Kuranda station is reached soon after. A 45 minute stop at Kuranda enables the locomotive to couple on the other end of the train and ready to make the return journey. Being the only shortline in Australia to haul passengers makes this line most interesting.

# Styrafoam Scenery



## SCENERY CROSS SECTION:

Editor's Note: This is the first part of a multi-part series on scenery that will appear in the HOTBOX. By the time this series is finished, we hope to have presented to you all the well known scenery techniques along with a few of the lesser known ones. We decided to start off this series with one of the newer scenery techniques because it is easy for a beginner to try. Yet regardless of your "standing" in this hobby, I hope that all our members will learn some important lessons from this series.

For some model railroaders, including me, constructing realistic scenery can be a difficult task. However, a relatively new scenery technique shows that realistic scenery might not be as difficult as you imagined. The basic component of this system is styrafoam and its main advantage is that it's easy to work with plus some of the results you achieve can be quite dramatic.

Plaster has been the primary component of model railroad scenery construction for many years and its main drawback is that you had to work with it before it hardened. Styrafoam does not present this dis-

advantage. In fact, if you get tired of creating scenery today, you can come back tomorrow--or next week--and continue right where you stopped.

Basically, all you have to do is get a bunch of styrafoam and stack it piece by piece shaping it to the contour that you desire. The best type of styrafoam to use is that which is used for insulation. It comes in 2x8 foot and 4x8 foot sheets with 3/4" and 3" thicknesses. Before you begin, you should have a basic idea as to what features you want to include on your pike (i.e. valleys, hills, mountains, etc.). Then cut the pieces to size, glue and stack them until you roughly reach your contour. Place weights on top and allow it to dry overnight. The next step is to shape the styrafoam and here you'll need a rotary rasp and electric drill or a wood rasp. One word of warning: Styrafoam dust from cutting and rasping is dangerous to your lungs so you should always wear a dust mask and have plenty of ventilation. If you want to make ditches or small ravines, a sharp modeling knife will do the trick.

Now that you have your basic contour, you can cover it with a thin layer of plaster in order to make it one continuous landscape. Sound easy? It is, so why don't you try it!

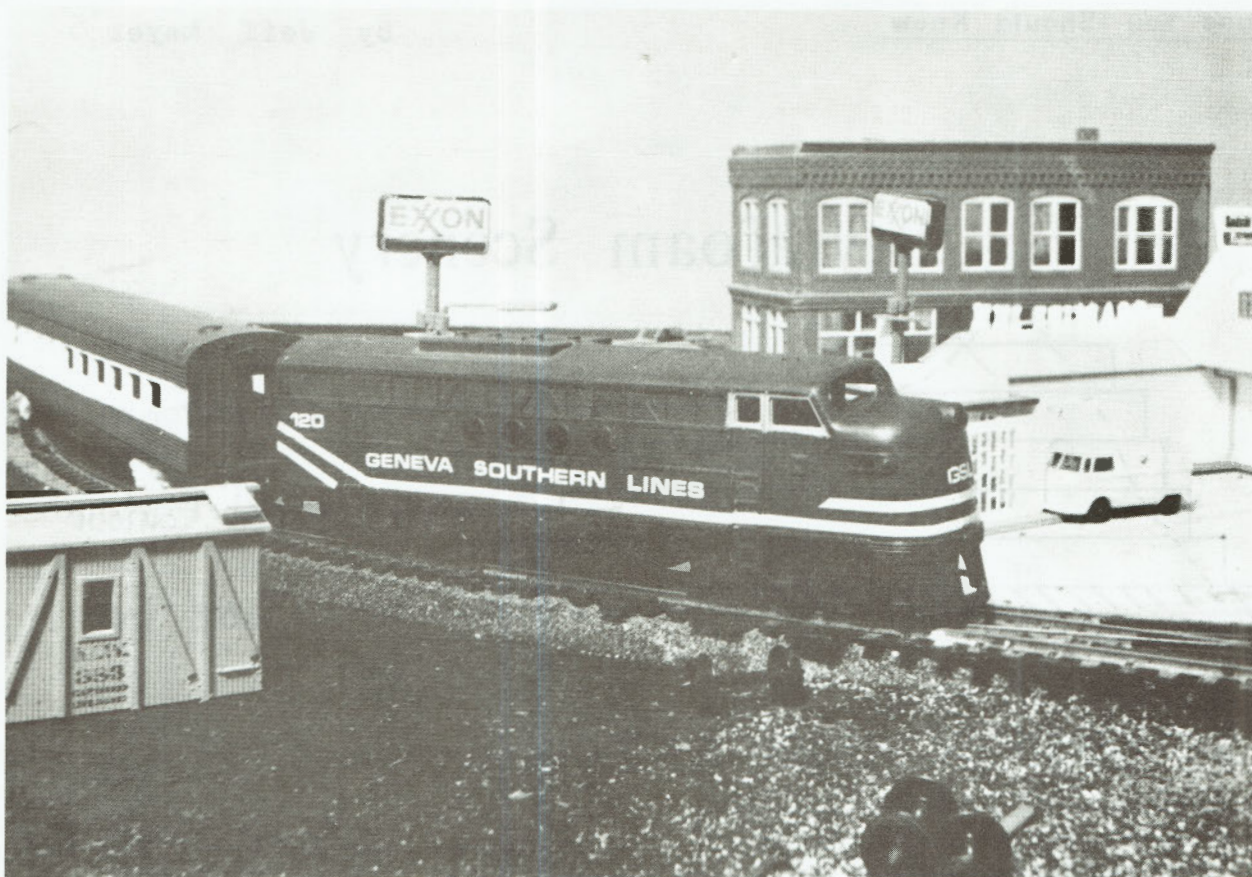


Photo by Gerry Dobey

# What's In A Name?

By Steven Masih

Notice anything unusual about the photograph leading off this article other than the fact that it is a model shot? That's right, the name of the railroad is the photographer's own personal concoction. Do you know how the photographer picked this name out of the zillion different possibilities? Well, the story is interesting and worthy of retelling here: The Geneva Southern Lines (GSL for short) is a model railroad that theoretically runs from the Twin Cities to Chicago. However, while doing so the line passes through several towns name Geneva in different states yet. Furthermore, each Geneva is just a little farther south (if you start from the Twin Cities) than the previous so the name just dictated itself.

Unfortunately, the name of your model railroad may not be so easy to derive. Therefore, let's investigate one of the many processes used to develop a reasonably good name for a model railroad. For lack of better terminology,

I will call this the personal area identification naming process, or the PAIN process for short. The best way to show how the PAIN process works is to illustrate how I used it to develop a name for my model railroad.

The first thing to do is to start with the "personal" part of the PAIN process. Why? Well, model railroading is a very personal and individualistic hobby and thus your railroad, and its name, should somehow express your personal feelings about it. For instance, I wanted my railroad to be good. Something special, something to be proud of, something that was . . . well . . . GREAT! So that's how I obtained the first part of my name.

Secondly, you are to use the "area identification" part of the PAIN process. Since the theoretical location of your railroad is important in terms of identity, your name should help in locating it. Well, my railroad is located in the narrow belt between the Plains and the Rocky

(cont'd next page)

Mountains so I added Plains to the name. Hence the Great Plains RR.

As you may have already guessed, this is a much simplified version of how the name of my railroad slowly evolved. Actually, it took me two entire years of unconcentrated study to devise that name. Of course, if you don't like my system, there are others which will produce just as good results. You might try visiting your local library and obtaining a list of the short line railroads that were incorporated in your state. Old official railway guides are also useful for this purpose.

Still another way is to consider several of your favorite railroads and try combining them together to obtain a new name. A good example of this name kitbashing resulted when the Burlington Northern burst on the scene. The name was derived from the railroads that merged into it. The word "Northern" came from the northern in Great Northern and Northern Pacific and "Burlington" came from the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy RR (I guess the SP&S wasn't important enough to make the name). Whatever process you choose in naming your model railroad, I hope it is less of a PAIN than mine.

Where and when were the words railway and railroad first used? Which is the world's longest rail journey? Where is the world's highest railroad station? Which are the longest railroad tunnels in the world? Where did a railcar carry a lifeboat and lifebelts as normal equipment? Which state in the US has the most railroad mileage?

The answers to these and many other railroad related questions can be found in the Guinness book of Rail Facts and Feats. The book is illustrated with about 200 black and white illustrations plus 16 pages of color. The author, John Marshall, has combined the qualities of readability and erudition while concentrating on giving as much space to the facts as to the feats.

This book is available exclusively at 50% off to all TAMK members (the price given at the beginning of this review includes the discount). Incidentally, a copy of this book was awarded to the winners of the TAMK's convention pass contest, Ken Keels and Dan Carroll.

--Jeff Wilke

Tech II Loco-Motion Train Control,  
Model Rectifier Corp., Edison, NJ  
08817 \$29.00

When MRC came out with their Tech II train controls, they did something great for model railroaders who don't have a great deal of money to spend. They gave us an excellent, versatile train control at an affordable price.

I'm relatively new to model railroading, so when I went to look for a model train control, I wasn't quite sure what I was looking for. I did the smart thing by obtaining different manufacturer's brochures and when I came to MRC's Tech II, I knew I found what I was after.

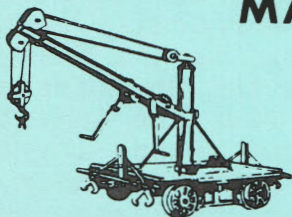
Let me explain the Tech II's extra functions. The throttle has a momentum feature which allows prototypical starting and stopping. Then there is a brake lever which can be used to slow or stop your train. All in all, I think this is an excellent train control and would recommend it if you're looking for one.

--Carter Looney

## MAINTENANCE

OF

WAY



M of W is a product review column written by our members on model railroading and railfanning items that may be of interest to you. All the opinions presented are those of the reviewer and are not necessarily those of the TAMK or the HOTBOX. Please submit reviews to the HOTBOX Editor.

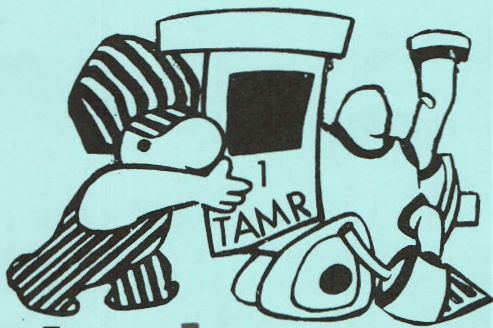
Guinness Book of Rail Facts and Feats  
by John Marshall. Sterling Publications,  
2 Park Ave., New York, NY 10016.. \$9.00  
plus \$1.25 postage and handling.

Diesel Spotter's Guide Update by Jerry Pinkepank & Louis Marre. Kalmbach Publishing Co., 1027 N. Seventh St., Milwaukee, WI 53233. \$7.95 plus 75¢ postage and handling. 159 pages. Softcover.

This book discusses the locomotives produced after 1972, it includes diesels, industrial units, electrics, rebuilds, slugs and light weight power train cars. Photographs along with general information--such as model, horsepower, cylinders, length, year(s) produced, number of units sold--help to totally describe all the entries in the book. Also included are all the variations plus information on how to differentiate similar units.

The book is very helpful in giving information, photographs and variations which can be used as a basis for model building. The photographs are also useful for super-detailing projects if you care to go that route. Any serious railfan or model builder should consider investing in this book for their library.

--Ken Keels



# Helpers

Do you have any helpful hints for making your model railroad look more realistic that don't take a lot of time or money? If you do, consider submitting them to the HELPERS column. All items are to be sent to the HOTBOX Editor.

Do you have a bad-order car sitting on a lonesome siding away from all the rail traffic? Is it one of those cars that refuses to run properly for you? I have a solution that could keep it from the scrapyards or those devils in the M of W department. Have

you ever thought of starting a major car rebuilding program? On my Bow Valley Ry (we call it BV Rail), we are going out to those lonesome sidings, picking up those trouble-maker cars and taking them to my rebuilding shops (i.e. workbench). Here cannibalistic maintenance workers strip the cars down to these three basic groups: (1) body shell; (2) floor and/or underframe and (3) truck and coupler assemblies. From these parts, we build mutations that the car builder never dreamed of.

My experience in this mutilating activity began with an 85 foot hi-cube boxcar made by Athearn, when I purchased this monstrosity of a car, I thought it would look great rolling on my layout. Yet all it did was to give me problems because it would not take my curves. My solution: turn it into a flatcar. Here's how I did it: First I removed the body shell and underframe from the floor assembly. Then the trucks and couplers were removed before I damaged them. At this time, I also removed the coupler from the sort of oddball Talgo arrangement as these were useless for my purposes. Next the chopping of the car. Some of the floor from each end of the car floor had to be removed as I was going to use the original bolster arrangement and too much overhang between the couplers and the wheels would cause the same problem I was trying to cure.

Next the floor deck was shortened in the middle, by surgically removing a portion so I would have a fifty foot flatcar. Then the underframe was shortened to fit. Glue the underframe and floor pieces and attach the trucks and couplers. Now a styrene deck, scribed if you wish, is fashioned for the top of the flat. As I'm planning to affix a load to this car, it will act as the car weight. Paint and letter the car to suit. This technique can be used on many types of cars to create many other types such as gondolas, hoppers and even pulpwood flats. I hope you'll start up your car rebuilding program soon. Needless to say, the possibilities are endless.

--Steve Harris



## Getting To Know You

Any member, new or veteran, who has not already had his/her life story poured out to the world through these pages is invited to send an autobiography of about three paragraphs for publication. This is a reader oriented section which depends on you for support. We hope to include this column as often as there is material for it.

Hi! I'm GEORGE FLETCHER and I've been interested in trains for as long as I can remember. I feel that I have railroading in my blood on account of the fact that my great grandfather was a Reading engineer. I still remember my first train set, a Lionel 2-8-4 built in 1954. This train was handed down to me through the family and I still have it packed away. My first layout consisted of various HO sets put together. I called it the Medford & Northeastern. However, the M&NE was torn down about the time I started reading MODEL RAILROADER because I got tired of looking at the M&NE after reading about the professional layouts in the magazine. The 4x8 foot table that held up the M&NE will also be the starting point for my new Glenview & Waterburo Falls when time and money become available.

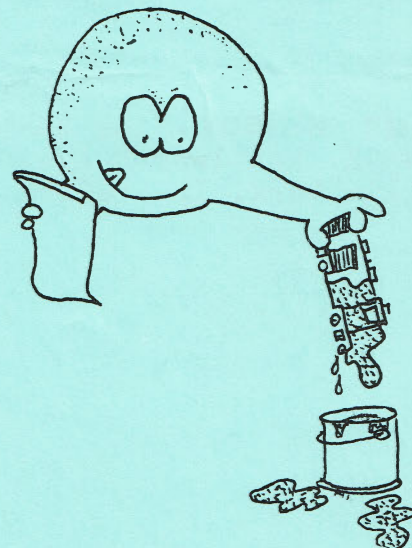
In the meantime, I am storing up the knowledge from the model magazines and am also keeping up on the prototype by writing to various railroads for information and reading TRAINS.

Hi! I'm Dave Thomas and I got started in model railroading in the fourth grade. A friend showed me his 4x8 layout and from that moment on, I was hooked. I was anxious to get started so I dug out my old Tyco Santa Fe train set and had it running in a jiffy. Then the expansion bug hit me and I found I wasn't satisfied with an oval trackplan.

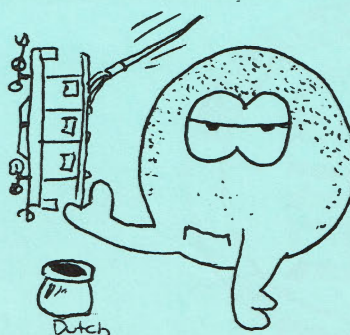
About three weeks later, I obtained

the materials needed to start expanding and my parents noticed my apparent interest in trains. The next evening my dad brought home a copy of MODEL RAILROADER as well as Linn Westcott's HO RAILROAD THAT GROWS. These items only whetted my appetite and another trip was required to obtain some plywood. By Christmas, my list contained all model railroad related items. That first layout got as far as the benchwork stage before I lost interest and gave up.

About two years later, my interest in model railroading and railfanning was rekindled. So I started my 2nd and current layout based on the B&O. Right now I'm changing the trackplan for more prototypical and realistic operation. My future goals are to finish the train room, change around my layout, join a model railroad club and the NMRA plus help to promote the TAMM and write a couple of articles for the HOTBOX.



Apply a light coat of paint to highlight weathered areas on the model.



Dear Sir,

In reference to your enquiry on our fast dry epoxy paint

**FRONT COVER:** Hop aboard and join us for a historical look at the Saugus & Pacific! The SP built it and later let it go to pot, but then just as it seemed all hope was lost, our author, Ken Keels stepped in and bought the line. The drawing on the cover of this issue shows the condition of the railroad when he purchased it. To see what improvements were made, turn to page four and start reading.

## MARKERS:

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE:** Come with us as we take a look at Joe Dennis' Island Transport RR. Part Two of our scenery series will discuss hardshell scenery techniques and we'll have a short interview with Russ Larson, Editor of *MODEL RAILROADER*. All this, our usual columns plus an election ballot will be coming your way in the March/April issue of the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading.

**NOMINATIONS:** In this issue you will find a nomination form, we hope that you will use it to help better the TAMR. Also pay particular notice to the survey question on the form. See *CRUMMY NEWS* for additional information.

**TAMR HOTBOX**, "the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"  
145 E. Kenilworth Ave.  
Villa Park, IL 60181

PLACE

*FIRST*  
~~CLASS~~ CLASS MAIL

