



THE VILLAGER

The Official Newsletter of the Plasticville Collectors Association

Volume 19

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Number 1

A BRIEF HISTORY OF K-LINE AS IT PERTAINS TO PLASTIC BUILDINGS AND ACCESSORIES

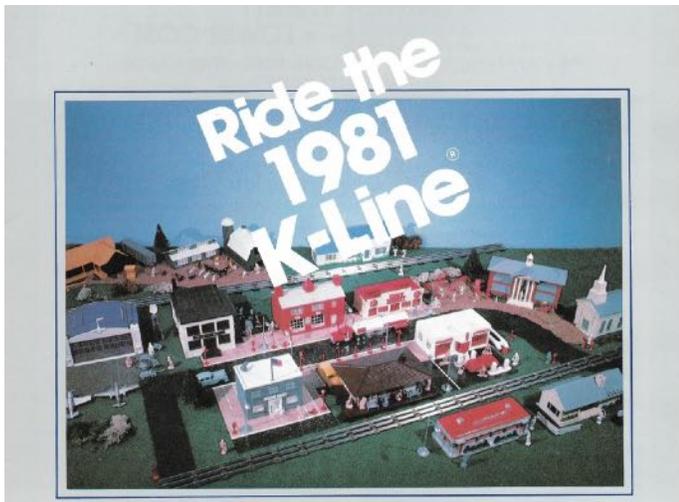


DONALD W. HUOVINEN

A number of articles and books have been written about the rise and fall of K-Line. The definitive source for information about K-Line's early years can be found in "K-LINE® Collector's Guide Volume 1: Trains 1985-1998". This book gives an extensive look at K-Line's history and records the production history of K-Line trains from 1985 to 1998. Unfortunately the plastic buildings and accessories are only mentioned in passing. A follow-up book covering the years from 1999-2005 has never been written which is unfortunate as these were the years that K-Line continued to raise the bar for train production.

This article will give a brief overview of K-Line's plastic building and accessory production and will identify significant milestones in production and marketing.

K-Line first cataloged buildings in the 1981 catalog. The catalog cover invited readers to "Ride the 1981 K-Line®". The buildings were prominently displayed on the cover because at that time



that was what K-Line was making. Inside the text read "Welcome to K-Lineville®!". The catalog included actual photographs of the buildings and accessories, although the photos may not have been of items manufactured during production runs. The catalog shows 14 buildings and 3 accessories. "Also

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available but not pictured" were 6 additional accessories. All of these buildings/accessories were manufactured using the old Marx molds. Generally the buildings were molded in different colors than those sold by Marx although in some cases the colors were similar, only the shade being different as well as the sheen. Photo 1 shows the cover of the 1981 catalog and Photo 2 shows some of the buildings offered.

In 1982 K-Line offered the same buildings and accessories but this time all of the smaller accessories were pictured. K-Line also introduced 5 K-Lineville Historical Buildings. Two of these, the K-4193 Statue of Liberty and K-4194 Historical Billboards, would later be incorporated into their regular train offerings.

1983 was a breakout year. The same 14 buildings were shown however three were offered in a "NEW COLOR" and the K-4111 Church offered "NEW FIGURES". The "NEW COLOR" was the start of what would be the seemingly endless color variations offered throughout the years. K-Line added 11 more accessories and 4 more Historical Buildings to its line.

1984 saw the addition of one small accessory, K-107 Portable Spotlights, and the K-4120 Ranch House in a "NEW COLOR".

K-Line did not issue a catalog in 1985; they were too busy to print a catalog as this was the first year that K-Line manufactured trains. The newly manufactured trains were highlighted in the 1986 catalog. Also shown were nine new large operating accessories plus 4 new other smaller accessories. K-4197, The Taj Mahal, was dropped from the Historical Buildings.

1987 saw many changes for the plastic building collector. K-Line introduced their first train sets. Significantly for plastic building and accessory collectors, K-Line enhanced the play value of the sets by including small accessories with the sets. This would set

the pattern for the preponderance of the sets produced by K-Line. Most sets included at least 5 telephone poles and 12 yard signs. Some sets included far more buildings and accessories, a number of which were unique to that set either in color or signage, or both. Equally important, the catalog showed 9 "BRAND NEW K-LINEVILLE BUILDING KITS". None of the new buildings shown were actual photos; they were all artist's impressions. Five of the new buildings were created by designing new molds for the buildings fronts. The sides, roof, and rear of the buildings were identical to those of the supermarket. The new buildings would form the basis of what would become the Marketplace Series. K-Line also broke ground by introducing 4 brand new two story buildings which used all new tooling. The new buildings are shown in Photo 3. This was a banner year.

The 1988 catalog had a new format: there were new photographs of all the items offered. But 1988 also was the year K-Line introduced the ADD-A- FLOOR for their two story buildings introduced the previous year. One could "turn your two story buildings into three stories (or more) with this simple addition". This addition emulates Plasticville's Apartment House Add-A-Floor. K-Line's K-4050 Colonial House, K-4120 Ranch House and K-4132 Barn and Chicken Coop were noted as being available "in a variety of colors". K-4194 Historical Billboards were now identified as a Non-Operating Accessory, rather than a Historical Building.

Nothing was changed in the 1989 catalog regarding plastic buildings and accessories except that the Historical Buildings were dropped.

In 1990 K-Line began producing specially decorated custom and specialty train sets and licensed products. The 1990 K-Line Pre-

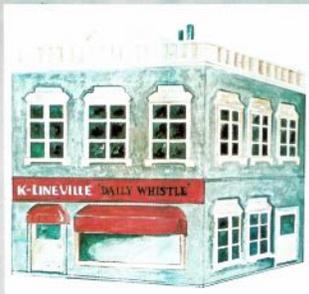
BRAND NEW K-LINEVILLE® BUILDING KITS

Full O Scale

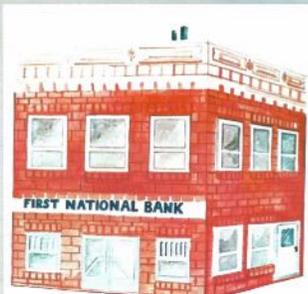
- Brand New Designs
- Easy to assemble
- Pre-colored parts
- Realistic detailing



K-4105 Hardware Store



K-4221 Newspaper Building



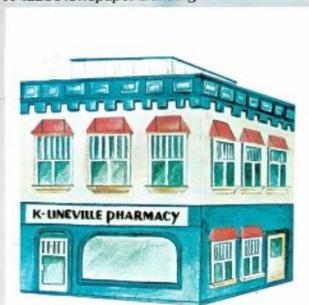
K-4222 Bank



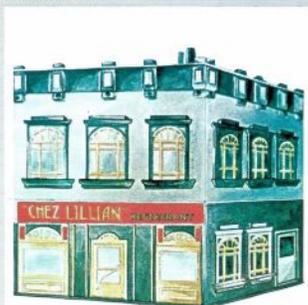
K-4101 Book Store and Laundromat



K-4102 7-11 Convenience Store



K-4223 Pharmacy



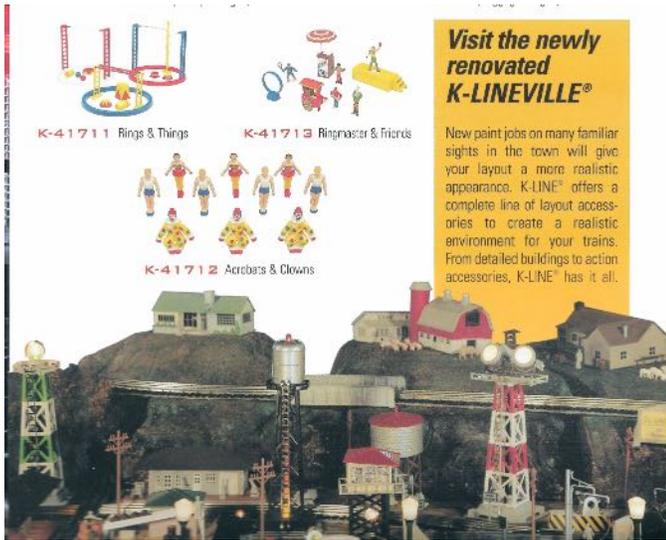
K-4224 Restaurant



K-4103 Hair Salon and Pizza Parlor



K-4104 Bakery and Liquor Store



mium Catalog showed a number of examples of these items. The catalog stated that you could “design your own set” and it could be “accessorized as you please”. The production of the many different Procter and Gamble premium sets set the stage for the production of numerous specialty and licensed sets and accessories. In addition to specially decorated locomotives and cars, many of the sets also included specially decorated buildings and



accessories, especially billboards. These were a growing part of K-Line’s business. In 1993, four of the eight sets produced were uncataloged specialty sets. The number of licensed items might have peaked in 2004 with no fewer than 197 different licensed items shown in the 2004 First Edition catalog. Many of these items were plastic buildings and accessories. Some of these items appear to have been produced in relatively small numbers and because they are sought by both toy train enthusiasts and brand collectors (especially Coca-Cola) they are difficult to find.

K-Line established the K-Line Collector’s Club in 1992. Initially, for a relatively small fee, members of the club received a car, a catalog, the K-Line Connection (a newsletter), discounts on merchandise and the opportunity to purchase limited production items and K-Line Collector’s Club exclusives. Later there would be several membership levels at different price points, with different offers. However the KCC was always a terrific bargain regardless of membership level. Foremost for the collector of plastic buildings was the 1992 K-Line Collector’s Club Christmas

Village (K-42101) and the K-40186A Operating Billboard w/Starlight Diner #2 first offered in 2003.

The next major event for K-line, building-wise was introduced in the 1997 Toy Fair Catalog. The reader was invited to “Visit the newly renovated K-LINEVILLE”. “New paint jobs on many familiar sights in the town will give your layout a more realistic appearance”. The buildings were partially painted and definitely were far more realistic than those previously produced. Curiously there were no individual listings or photos of any of the new buildings in the catalog, just a small photo of a number of buildings and accessories on a display layout. Photo 4 shows a cut from that catalog.



The newly decorated buildings were not shown until the 1999 First Edition Catalog. They were described as being “detailed buildings painted in bold new colors”. There were photos of each of the buildings and a simple diorama displaying many of them. Eight building kits were included in the Marketplace Series. Eleven other buildings rounded out K-Lineville. Interestingly these new buildings would only be cataloged through the 2000 Second Edition catalog. Photo 5 shows one of the pages from that catalog.

A major change was shown in the 2002 First Edition catalog with the introduction of the built-up buildings. The buildings, which were actually operating accessories, were pre-assembled on a cast base and included a number of amenities, typically including smoke, lighting and animation. In 2002 these would include the Colonial House, shown in Photo 6, the “Retro Manufacturing” Factory, and Statue of Liberty on Base. These buildings were quite an upgrade but received relatively little fanfare. Returning after a 13 year hiatus was the Statue of Liberty Kit. Lady Liberty was now molded in verdigris rather than copper as previously offered. K-Line also introduced new accessories/buildings which were not based on the old Marx molds. These built-up buildings included the Starlite Diner, based on an aluminum passenger car, and the Caboose Yard Office based on a caboose with cupola.

Finally in the 2003 First Edition catalog K-Line re-introduced the Trackside Collection. The buildings were no longer kits. “These fully assembled buildings are fully detailed and include all figures and accessories shown”. The buildings were painted and included at least interior illumination and smoke where appropriate. Six buildings were shown. Photo 7 shows one of the pages from the 2003 catalog. Only the Service Station had previously been identified as a component of the Trackside Collec-

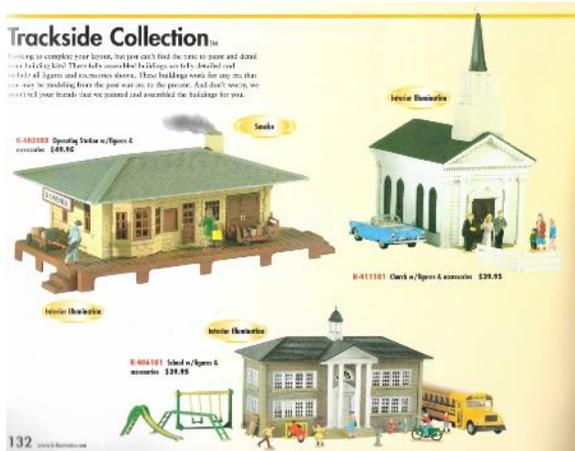
tion. The other five buildings had been part of K-Lineville. In the 2003 Second Edition catalog these identical buildings were now

hyped as "NEW!" These would continue to be cataloged through the 2005 First Edition catalog.

In summary K-Line's building and accessory evolution was similar to that of their well-documented train evolution. K-Line started by re-using the existing Marx molds with the buildings molded in colored plastic, followed by the expansion of the line with new tooling to create additional buildings from the existing molds. This was joined by new tooling for all new buildings. The previously unpainted building kits were then enhanced by having portions of the buildings painted. Finally K-Line offered fully assembled buildings, many with figures, accessories, and animation.

As always I welcome your additions, corrections or comments. This is a work in progress and if you are interested in K-Line buildings and wish to assist please e-mail me at dhuov@aol.com.

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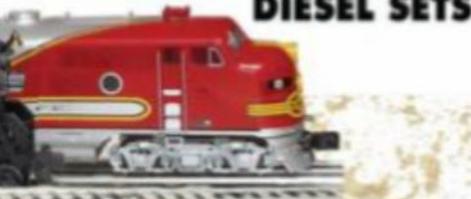
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EDITOR'S COLUMN



This is the first online newsletter, this issue is also the first in my sixth year as editor, hard to believe. The future does not look good though, the number of submissions is at a record low. You will notice that this newsletter has a lot less content in it. After removing the PCA business pages, the parts bin, and new members listings there is a lot more room for great articles but so far we just don't have the submissions. Hopefully some of our former members, or new readers, will take up the challenge to author some original content. If we don't get new content I foresee the end of the newsletter within the year.

Matt Harvazinski, *The Villager* Editor

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COLLECTION FOR SALE

The Plasticville and toy train collection of deceased PCA member Robert Ruhlman, member #17-1012, is for sale.

There are hundreds of items: Plasticville sets and dealer boxes as well as toy trains.

The collection is in the Buffalo, NY area.

I am the executrix of his estate and prefer to sell the entire collection to one person but will consider "piecing it out".

For additional information contact me at
heatherkitanik@gmail.com.

GREENBERG'S 2020 LIONEL POCKET PRICE GUIDE

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

The Lionel Greenberg's pocket price guide for 2020 has been available from Kalmbach books since early October. Kalmbach only published a Lionel guide again this year. I was told by them that they will publish a Flyer guide every other year. Their comment regarding a Marx guide is that there is not a large enough market for them to publish a volume on a regular basis. The last Marx guide was published in 2011.

The new Lionel guide grows every year. It is now 15/16 inch thick. It contains the same seven sections as did the 2019 edition as well as an introduction, understanding values, and an abbreviations section. One will need something larger than a blue jeans pocket to carry it now.

The prices compared to last year are a bit odd this year. In general the prices on prewar and modern did not change from last year. All of the postwar pieces that I track changed except for the 746 long stripe tender version. It remained at \$493 and \$983 for good and excellent condition, respectively.

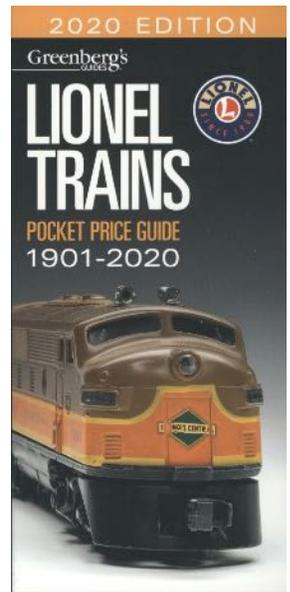
The five stripe Tuscan GG-1, 2360, lost \$1 in excellent condition. The green 2360 GG-1 gained \$1 in excellent condition and \$22 in good condition. The only other changes were for the 2343 AA and the 2343B, type B units. Although their values remained the

same for excellent condition the AA unit gained \$25 and the B unit gained \$5 in good condition.

It seems to me that the market is lethargic for postwar pieces and stagnant for both the prewar and the modern pieces - at least for the pieces that I have been tracking.

The 2020 Lionel guide is available from Kalmbach Books, 21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukesha, WI, 53186. It is listed on their website: <http://www.kalmbachstore.com>. Select TOY TRAINS from the page that appears. The listed price is \$21.99. Their toll free number is 800-533 6644 Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Central Time.

The guide is available on Amazon in both new and used condition. It is available from Barnes & Noble at the publisher's price of \$21.99.



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MARX ENCHANTED VILLAGE

A "Close to HO" Marx Plastic Village

JOHN L. NIEHAUS



Paul Slowick, a PCA member, emailed me the photos above and asked if I had any information regarding the pieces in the photos or if other members had ever seen them. He came across them at a local train show. They are solid white Marx buildings as can be seen above. They are from left to right: general store, church, barn, and Colonial type of house. He also stated that each piece has a molded in MarX logo on their inside surfaces.

I asked Paul to verify their size as they seemed to be a bit smaller in size/scale as the HO buildings behind them. He replied that they are a bit smaller than HO. Their width, depth, and height, in inches per Paul are: general store; $3\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{3}{4} \times 2$; church; $3\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ barn; $3\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{4} \times 2\frac{3}{4}$, and the Colonial type house; $4 \times 1\frac{3}{4} \times 2$.

I started my research of the items on eBay as the buildings in Paul's photo were definitely Marx. My, "exact words - any order" search terms were a combination of Marx and the name of one of the buildings (marx church, marx barn). I came up empty-handed in all of my searches.

My next thought was that maybe these were possibly from a Marx playset. My research library has no Marx playset books to use as reference. I queried Facebook and found the *Marx Playset Collectors* group and joined it. I posted Paul's photos to the group with a request for information related to the buildings after being approved for membership in the group. I posted my request at 7:00 PM and much to my surprise I received three replies to the post before Noon the next day!



Mark Hegeman replied that the buildings were from a playset called *Enchanted Village*. He also stated that the buildings had to be painted. He, as well as Gregory Urbach, provided a photo of the set box (above). The box is quite substantial at 3 inches high \times 10 inches deep \times 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ wide. As can be seen from the photo, the set contained the following pieces: house, store, church, filling

station, barn, hedge, fence, trees, people, animals, cars, trucks, train (below), paints, and brush. I must presume that all of the pieces were molded in white. Nowhere on the box do I see a numeric reference to the total contents. Gregory also provided me with a photo of the instruction sheet for the paints that came in the set. It is a bit odd that the paints in the set were not oil based but watercolors, per the instruction sheet, but a quick dip in a sink would have made it possible to repaint a piece in a different color.



Kent Owen Sprecher replied that it was "Also sold in colors for train layouts.". He was gracious enough to provide a photo of some of the pieces in various colors (photo 5).

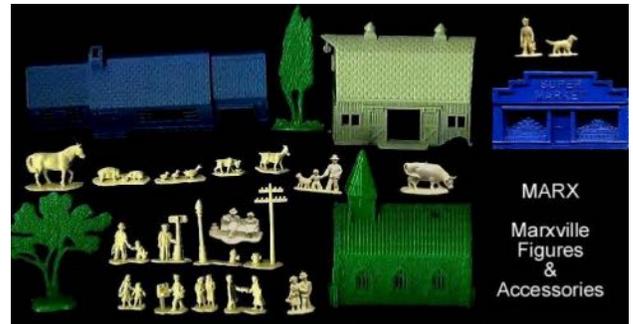


Photo credits: Paul Slowick photos 1 and 2. Gregory Urbach, photos 3 and 4. Kent Owen Sprecher photo 5.



K-LINE KRONICLES

#K-4102 More Ranch House Variations, no Room to Collect, and K-Line Frustrations



ED BERG

Today it's about nothing really new. I have covered the Ranch House before, a yellow walled/aqua roof variant and today we'll show TWO K-Line #K-4120 Ranch Houses in different color schemes: yellow walls/dark blue roof, cream walls/aqua roof. Unfortunately these were purchased without boxes so I don't have the boxes for these to be able to photograph. I've got to note that my collection only spanned the early K-Line years and by the time Lionel bought them out and was producing these in the "K-Line by Lionel" moniker I was long gone from the scene for reasons stated below. Between original Marx and K-Line there's enough color combinations to make a really interesting suburban street setting. These are so reminiscent of the 'cookie-cutter' suburbs of the '50s and '60s that it would be relatively easy to make a decent sized model subdivision – if you had the room.



Room. Yeah that's a tough one. After years of collecting K-Line it kind of hit me that no matter how many kits were stored in boxes on the shelf or in bins, unless I hit Megabucks at the casino, I just wouldn't have a home large enough to build my 'dream layout' and be able to accommodate everything! I had entered this hobby primarily as a Marx collector and here The Cave is filling up with K-Line. Yup, that was a sobering realization. Over the years the collection has gotten pretty thinned out through eBay sales but there's still some K-Line out there in The Cave, just not to the extent there once was. But having room wasn't the only issue with K-Line.



Which brings us to: *Poor quality control!* Here's an example: I had acquired a purple and aqua Ranch House, 'Mint in Sealed Package', - MISSING THE ROOF AND SHRUBS!! It wasn't the first

time parts were missing from their kits, and occasionally there were extra parts, but after a few years it was apparent there was no adult supervision at the plant these were made at. As I was pulling out kits to photograph, I was constantly confronted with missing pieces and that meant buying an additional kit. I couldn't depend on 'MIB' designations so buying a used kit where the seller specifically stated the kit was complete was the best option - collecting K-Line is not for the faint of heart. It's such a shame too as the basic product is so nice. So, should you decide that one day you'd like to start collecting vintage K-Line, simply be aware of what you're getting into. 'Nuff said.

Enjoy!

Ed "ICE" Berg, Las Vegas, NV

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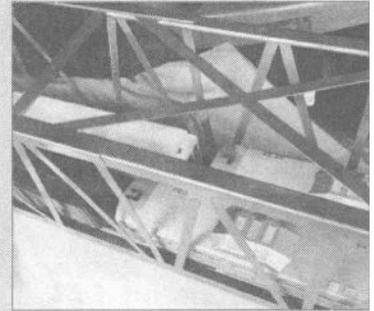
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Boxed Kits, Complete

1981 Farm Building Scenic Classic \$35
0400 Mobile Home (Blue or Cream walls) \$10 Mint
0500 KING Apartment House (Brown) \$30
0550 King Add A Floor (Brown or Red) \$8 each 3/\$20
1983 Colonial Mansion Scenic Classic \$20 Mint
1984 Colonial Church Scenic Classic \$25 Mint
1986 New Eng. Ranch Scenic Classic \$20 Mint
1987 Barn Scenic Classic \$18 Mint
45985 LCCA Air Admin Bldg Orange/Blue, \$20 Mint
1618 TV Station with RARE Decal \$95

1923 Roadside Stand \$20 Mint
1809 Loading Platform \$15 Mint
DE-7 Diner \$10
1504 Trailer \$30
1624 House Under Construction \$30
1804 Greenhouse, \$30
45986 LCCA Hangar, \$20 Mint
ON-5 Outdoor Necessities \$35
SC-4 School with RARE red weathervane \$75

No Box Kits, Complete

Railroad Work Car \$10, Suburban Station \$8, Mobile Home (6 different colors) \$12 ea or 6/\$60
Barn \$8, Hobo Shacks \$15, School \$10, Fire Department \$10, Tumpike (green walls) \$15
Diner \$8, Add-A-Floor \$6 each 3/\$15, Colonial Mansion (red roof) \$15, Colonial Church \$15

Accessories

Telephone Booth \$4 each or 3/\$10, Outhouse (brown) \$4, 2 RED Fire Trucks \$10 per set
Street Corner signs with original tags 6 for \$8 24 Shrubs 3 each of 8 different colors \$20
Green Bus, Green or Yellow Ambulance \$5 ea, BBQs 5/\$10

PLASTICVILLE PARTS - \$1.00 ea unless otherwise noted (Reproductions unless noted as original.)

Factory(#1988): original walls, brown platform, Union Station (1958): original walls, roofs, canopies,
platforms, steps, Hobo Shack: original walls & roof (brown or dark grey), original rear canopy \$5
(brown or dark grey), original door, original window, Railroad work car: original walls & roof, original
canopy \$4, original steps \$2, House Under Construction: shovel, rake, hoe, bucket, Hospital: desk
chair, straight chair, 2 Story House: porch post, Fire Dept: red chimney cap, Police Dept: green
chimney cap, Tumpike: white lens holder, 2 lenses (Red or Green), Cattle Pen: crossbars
Tumpike: white cones 4/\$3, green sign \$3, Post Office: flag \$5,

PLASTICVILLE PARTS - \$1.50 ea (Reproductions unless noted as original.)

Airport: windsock, Log Cabin: chimney, Hospital: siren, Fire Department: siren
Bank: large or small canopy, House Under Construction: sawhorse (3 pieces)

STORYTOWN PARTS - \$1.00 ea (Reproductions unless noted as original.)

Jack & Jill: pail, Ginger Bread: brick, 3 Men: oar, Old Woman: clothesline, Goosey Gander: castle
flag, chain

PLASTICVILLE BUILDING INSERTS \$1.00/SET (Reproductions unless noted as original.)

Corner Store: original Hobby, News, or Sport, Factory: (#1988), original decal, Union Station:
original decal, Motel flowers, Large or Small Gas Station, Large or Small Supermarket,
5 & 10 Store, Hardware Store, Post Office, Suburban Station: roof signs (2)

Plastic Village Gazette RARE Issue #1, \$2 each, Issues 5 or 6, \$1 each

Dealer inquiries welcome for Plasticville Guides and Plasticville parts listed above.

Shipping: Boxed Plasticville \$7, No Box Plasticville, \$5, Parts, \$4

A HISTORY OF PLASTICVILLE: PART IX 1960–1964

TOM FRITSCH

1960

CROSSING SIGNAL (1304, 1937, 45937)

The Crossing Signal was originally sold in a blister pack of two signals with a card stock backing. The Crossing Signal was only available from 1960 through 1963 in this type of packaging. In 1981, Bachmann sold this Crossing Signal in the #1937 kit with six Crossing Gates, as well as with kit #45937. The Crossing Signal is white with red lenses.

BLOCK SIGNAL (1305)

The Block Signal is one of the more elusive small accessories made by Bachmann. It was only sold in a blister pack of two signals with a card stock backing. The Block Signal was only available from 1960 through 1963. The Block Signal is black with red and green lenses.

POPLAR TREES (1409)

The green Poplar Trees were composed of several sections of diminishing sizes placed one atop another to form the tree. They are somewhat structurally similar to the Pine Trees, but with a different shapes. They were introduced in 1960 and sold as four trees to a box (40 pieces). The Poplar Trees only lasted for two years.

RAILROAD WORK CAR (1625, 1917, 45306, 45983)

The Railroad Work Car was released in 1960 as #1625. Having disappeared after 1962, it reappeared in 1974 as #1917. The #45983 Hobo Jungle of 1997 includes a Railroad Work Car, two Hobo Shacks and an Outhouse. In 2005 the #45306 "Built-Up" Hobo Jungle was released.

The Lionel "Freight Area Set" #985, from 1961, included A Railroad Work Car, Switch Tower, Watchman's Shanty, Loading Platform, Water Tank, three Automobiles, twelve Railroad Signs and eight Telephone Poles. The Lionel "Railroad Structure Set" #988, issued in 1962 included a Railroad Work Car, Suburban Station, Watchman's Shanty, Water Tank, Station Platform, Hobo Shacks, Bench and Citizens.

CORNER STORE (1626, [0100, 0200, 0300-King])

The former Littletown Corner Store was introduced by Bachmann in 1960. The small arched window, found on the Littletown design, was eliminated, even though it was shown in the catalogs as having it. The catalogs also showed the Littletown window inserts. When produced by Littletown, the Corner Store had six different establishments: drugs/cosmetics, ice cream, flowers, jewelry, elite restaurant and barbershop. The Corner Store was given the name "Men's Store" by Bachmann. It came in two combinations of gray and white. The Corner Store has "Little-town-type" slide-together corners, as well as Littletown doors (also found on the Motel and Colonial Mansion). The Corner Store lasted only to the end of 1961.

The Lionel "Town Set" #987, issued in 1962, included a Corner Store without its marquee-style sign, Church, Bank, large Gas

Station, one blue Automobile, twelve Street Signs and five Telephone Poles.

COVERED BRIDGE (1805, 1920, [0650-King], 45317, 45992)

Initially released in 1960 as #1805, the Covered Bridge lasted only two years. Early production had rust-colored walls with the roadway spray-painted tan. A gray roadway bridge was released in 1975 as #1920; it lasted until 1980. The #45992 was released in 1997 with red walls and a gray roadway and roof. In 2005, the #45317 "Built-Up" was released.

1961

HOUSE TRAILER (1504, [0400-King], 45310, 45612)

Issued in 1961, the House Trailer came in only two color variations: white walls and turquoise windows, roof, awning, base and wheels or with these colors reversed. With its arrival during the period of Lionel diversification and growing popularity of road racing, it has become somewhat difficult to locate. It disappeared with the publication of the 1964 catalog, which also contributes to its unusualness. The House Trailer was issued again in 1999 with a set of three trailers and a Flagpole and cataloged as #45612 (Trailer Park w/Flag Pole). The later were released in colors of gray, pink and aqua and were made in China. In 2005, the #45310 "Built-Up" Trailer Park was released, this time only including two trailers and a Flagpole. The #1504 number had previously been used to catalog the Platform Fence.

HOBO SHACKS (1627, 5627, 45306, 45983)

The Hobo Shacks are some of the scarcest of the Plasticville structures. The set included two shacks – one square and one rectangle in opposite colors of brown and gray. The amount of detail carved into the sides of the shacks is particularly impressive when compared with early Plasticville releases.

Originally released in 1961, the Hobo Shacks scarcity is a direct result of the sign of the times, when toy trains were being replaced with slot cars and "H0" scale trains. In 1963, their last year of issue, the Hobo Shacks were available in a Pliofilm bag as #5627. They returned in 1997 as a part of the #45983 Hobo Jungle. This set included two Hobo Shacks, a Railroad Work Car and an Outhouse. The shacks in the #45983 Hobo Jungle are very light gray and a brown similar to the 1961 originals, however the plastic is not as rigid as the older pieces and appears to be more transparent. Also, "Made in China" is stamped on the insides. In 2005, the #45306 "Built-Up" Hobo Jungle was released.

The Lionel "Railroad Structure Set" #988, issued in 1962, included Hobo Shacks Suburban Station, Watchman's Shanty, Water Tank, Railroad Work Car, Station Platform, Bench and Citizens.

SHADE TREES (1628, 49001)

Initially released in 1961, this kit formed three trees out of seven sections; each of diminishing size placed one atop another. The "branches" were colored olive green with brown marbling. Because of the delicate nature of these sections, they are easily broken. The green Shade Trees were initially cataloged for only

two years. In the #49001 release of 1998, the trees were colored a lighter green than the original with no marbling and were made in China.

AUTUMN TREE ASSORTMENT (1975, 49002)

The Plasticville Autumn Tree Assortment was made only one year, 1961, and consisted of 144 pieces that made up 18 individual trees. This set is highly prized by collectors. Included in the set were four orange Shade Trees, six orange Poplar Trees, four blue Pine Trees and four green Pine Trees. The 1998 release of #49002 includes only three yellow Shade Trees per box and was made in China. The #1975 catalog number was used again in 1970 for the Coaling Station.

1962

BUNGALOW (1629, 1810, 5629)

The Bungalow was issued by Bachmann in 1962 with the designation #1629. The number was changed to #1810 in 1967, but the box remained the same. In 1963, the #5629 Pliofilm bag version was released. This structure was originally made by Littletown. Bachmann added the front porch lights to make this home more attractive. These same lights had been used on the Split Level House. Bachmann also changed the front door style from the common Littletown style. The Plasticville version of the Bungalow has white walls. It commonly came with a charcoal roof, but it also came with a rarer green roof. The Bungalow came with an arbor and fence.

ROADSIDE STAND (1806, 1923, 5806, 45314 45621)

The Roadside Stand was introduced in 1962. The kit contained 20 small baskets, four large baskets, three produce bins, a scale, cash register, desk and potato sacks. It also came with a paint kit – the same one that accompanied the #1619 Plasticville Citizens. In 1977, it was reintroduced as #1923 with a decal in place of the molded sign. The original molded sign read “FRUIT – PLASTICVILLE – PRODUCE,” while the decal said “FRUIT – FARMER’S MARKET – PRODUCE.” The Roadside Stand was issued in a Pliofilm bag, #5806, in 1963. The #45621 version, released in 1999, had cream walls and a dark gray roof with a paper sign that says “PAUL AND LEE’S PRODUCE,” though the box shows it as “FRUITS – FARMER’S MARKET – PRODUCE.” A “Built-Up” version was issued as #45314 in 2005. The latter two versions were produced in China.

1964

COALING STATION (1957, 1975, 1976, 45301, 45957, 45979)

This was the last new structure that Bachmann produced for many years. It stands 12½ inches tall. Bachmann released the #1976 box in 1964, and then introduced the #1975 box six years later. The #1976 version is very difficult to locate. The #45979 version was issued in 1997. In 2005, the Coaling Station was issued as a “Built-Up” as #45301. The Coaling Station comes in only one color variation: brown and gray. The #1975 catalog number duplicates the same catalog number that Bachmann had used on the Autumn Tree Assortment.



The advertisement features the Lionel Trains logo on the left, which consists of a stylized 'L' inside a circle. To the right of the logo, the text "LIONEL TRAINS" is written in large, bold, red capital letters, and "MOUNTAIN LAKES, NJ" is written below it in bold, black capital letters. Below the text, there are two Lionel trains on a track. On the left is a black steam locomotive pulling a black coal tender. The tender has "SANTA FE" and "4193" written on it. On the right is a red and yellow diesel locomotive. The background is white.

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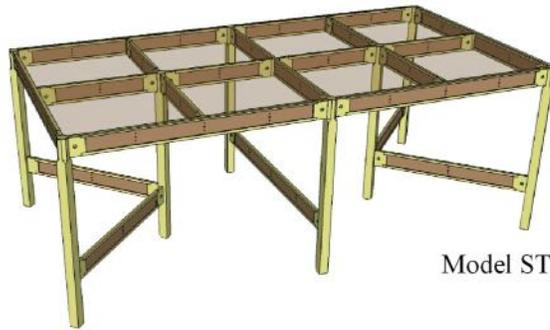
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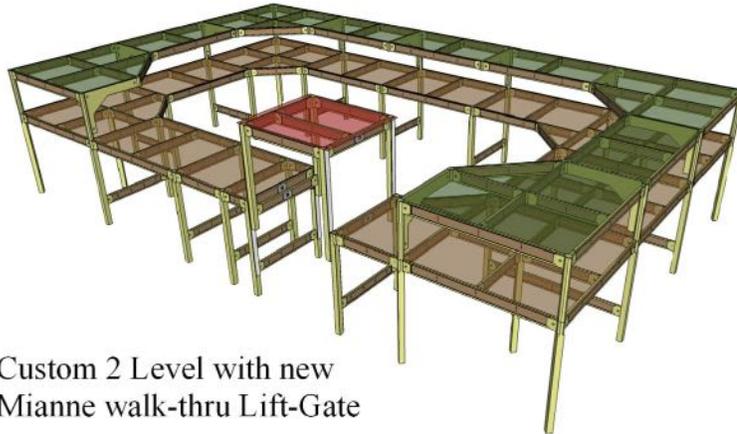
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THE HUNT FOR VARIATIONS III: FIRE DEPARTMENT SIREN

MATTHEW HARVAZINSKI



Four fire department versions. From left to right, FH-4 dark grey, 1607 dark grey, 1607 light grey, FH-4 light grey.

For such a simple structure, the Plasticville Fire Department is full of variations. In addition to the sirens which will be covered in this article there are also variations in the lettering. Early kits, like those pictured above, feature red letters that spell out "Plasticville Fire Dept." Later versions of the building dropped this text. Some hard-to-find versions without the "Plasticville Fire Dept." have "Engine Co 7" and "Ladder Co 8" painted black instead of red. The final version, which appeared in the box numbered 1956, lacked both the "Plasticville Fire Dept." Lettering, the "Engine Co 7" and "Ladder Co 8" text was unpainted. What may be less obvious is that there are a number of variations in the siren.

The early fire department appeared in the FH-4 box. Typically the siren was colored white. This version of the siren is considered the "large siren", it has a flat base. In addition to white, the siren can be found in both light grey and dark grey. These color variations match the light and dark grey found in the Hospital variations. With the introduction of the more difficult to find 1607 box, the size of the siren base was reduced. This "small siren" has a convex base which matches a concave indentation in the roof. The overall size of the siren base is smaller than the flat base siren. The small siren can also be found in both light grey and dark grey along with the normal white version. The image below shows the four versions of the grey siren. The first column is dark grey and the second is light grey. The top row is the large siren and the bottom row is the small siren.



The photo above shows the 1607 box on the left and the FH-4 box on the right. The FH-4 box is one of the most common boxes to find, you can find one at most train shows. The 1607 box is much more scarce. The 1614 box for the police station, styled in the same Art Deco style as the 1607, is even more difficult. Together they make an attractive pair for your collection. The image below shows three versions of the small siren, white, light grey, and dark grey. Notice how the convex base prevents the siren from standing up straight.



Adding a grey siren to your collection is not an unreasonable goal, especially since there are a number of different versions to hunt for! You can usually find at least one for sale on eBay. In terms of rarity, there seems to be little difference between the dark grey and light grey versions. Similar to the difference in scarcity between the 1607 and FH-4 boxes, the grey small sirens are more difficult to find compared with the large grey sirens. Typically this does not result in a higher cost.

Note: the police station in 1614 has an antenna base that is smaller than the PD-3 station, and is the same size as the small siren. Other siren colors have also been found, like red from the Make 'n' Play and police station green.



PLASTICVILLE BUILDINGS AND PARTS

Bill Weaver

PO Box 1061

Grand Rapids, MI 49501

Phone: 616 454-6037

The following parts are \$1.00 each plus shipping

Frosty Bar: pink back wall, L or R side wall, yellow back wall, L or R side wall, white counter, white roof, Chrome counter

Gas Station: front wall, back wall, L side wall, roof

School House: front wall, back wall, L or R side wall, roof

Fire House: back wall, L or R side wall

Police Station: dark grey rear wall, L or R side wall; light grey L or R side wall

Switch Tower: grey L or R side wall, rear wall; brown rear wall or R side wall

Bank: light grey front wall, L or R side wall

Loading Platform: green roof

Ranch House: pink front wall, L or R side wall; yellow L or R side wall; light blue R side wall;

white front wall, L or R side wall; dark brown front wall, L or R side wall

Motel: white front wall, rear wall, roof, end wall; pink front wall, rear wall, R or L side wall, roof, walkway

CC7/8 Church: brown door/windows front or side wall; grey door/windows side wall, rear wall

TV Station: red front wall, R wall, roof, WPLA sign, antenna base; white roof, L or R side wall, rear wall, antenna base

The following parts are \$2.00 each plus shipping

Dairy Barn: Tuscan red front, rear, L or R side wall, L or R roof, sliding door, L or R silo halves; red sliding door

Covered Bridge: Tuscan end, side wall, grey and white swirled roof

Diner: grey walls yellow trim, front wall, L or R side; grey walls red trim, front wall, L wall;

chrome front yellow trim, front wall; chrome front red trim, front, L or R side wall

Loading Dock: light or dark grey roof, building side, or platform

Coaling Station: brown L or R side wall, front wall, floor, rear wall, back brace; grey roof, brown coal chute,

PLASTICVILLE BUILDINGS- NO BOXES – PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE SHIPPING

\$5.00 buildings:

Cape Cod: white walls / red trim, white walls / brown trim, white walls / green trim

CC7/8 Church: white / brown trim, white / grey trim

Fire Station: white / red trim – no vehicles

Police Station: light grey, dark grey

\$8 buildings:

BN-1 Barn: white walls / red roof, red walls / white roof

\$10 buildings:

Ranch Houses: first color denotes wall color, second color denotes roof color

brown/red, blue/white, white/blue, green/white, pink/grey, turquoise/white, pea green/white

Colonial Mansion: white / blue roof, white / red roof

Watchman's Shanty: brown / grey trim

Loading Platform: grey shack / brown platform & roof

Frosty Bar: pink white trim, chrome counter; pink, white trim, pink counter; yellow, white trim, chrome counter;

yellow, white trim, yellow counter

Diner: grey walls, yellow trim

Small Supermarket: white / red roof

\$20 buildings:

Rural Station: brown / dark grey roof & trim (sealed bag)

\$25 buildings:

Covered Bridge: Tuscan red / grey trim

OTHER STUFF

Automobiles, \$5 – hood ornament or no, my choice: red, yellow, green, pastel blue

K-Line Coca Cola Pizza Parlor, no box, \$25 – sealed bag

K-Line Coca Cola Pop's Diner, no box \$25 – sealed bag

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THE PCA CORNER STORE



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Send a description of item you wish to purchase and a check or money order, payable to Plasticville Collectors Association for the total amount to Plasticville Collectors Association, 601 SE Second Street, Ankeny, IA 50021-3207.

Personalized address labels

A sheet of 30, personalized, high-quality color labels are available from the PCA. The labels will include the PCA logo in color and up to four lines of address. Each label is a generous 1 x 2 5/8 inches. The price is \$1.00 per sheet plus \$1.50 P&H for up to three sheets. Please add 20 cents per additional sheet over three.

PCA T-shirt

Navy blue 100% cotton, short sleeve shirt T-shirt with the PCA logo printed on the front in white. The prices are \$18 for small through X-Large, \$19 for XX-Large and \$20 for XXX-Large, shipping included, for each shirt. Please order the next larger size if you are concerned with fit. *** Only size M is currently in stock ***

PCA ballpoint pen

PCA silver barrel with blue soft grip, black ink ballpoint pen with silver accents. The pen is imprinted *Plasticville Collectors Assn, www.plasticvilleusa.org* in two lines in blue lettering. \$4.00, postpaid.

**** SOLD OUT ** Coffee Mug with PCA logo ** SOLD OUT ****

White ceramic 11 oz. ceramic mug. PCA blue or black logo. \$9.95 or two for \$15.95, postpaid. Please specify your color choice when ordering. Only 24 pieces of black logo mugs were produced. 1 black remaining.

PCA Ball Caps

Dark Blue, Velcro-back ball cap with white PCA logo embroidered on the front. \$13.00 postpaid. 10 remaining

Billboard Inserts

Printed on white cardstock. \$5.00 postpaid or emailed as a PDF for free. Two versions available:

1. "Welcome to Plasticville" billboard inserts Six identical inserts, sized to fit Plasticville billboard frames depicting a 50's vintage auto passing a billboard on its way into town with the same greeting.
2. Seven different subjects plus one "Welcome To Plasticville" inserts including Friskies dog food, Motorola, Mercury and Lincoln autos, Sunoco and Gulf motor oil, and Eberhard Faber pink erasers. All are mid-fifties vintage.

Do you have an idea for an item? Contact John Niehaus at secretary@plasticvilleusa.org or mail your suggestions to him at the address noted above.



The Villager is looking for new contributors. Contact the editor to find out how to participate and share your knowledge.

Did You Know?

Recently I received a question about which issue a specific article appeared in. While I am happy to help, there is also a self-help option. On the PCA website hover over the 'Newsletter' tab then pick 'Article Index'. You can search this document by author or title. Use 'Ctrl + F' on Windows or '⌘ + F' on a Mac.



PRODUCT REVIEWS

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

The *First Railroads, Atlas of Early Railroads*, Derek Hayes, 272 pages, softcover, 8 1/2 × 11, \$29.95. Published by Firefly Books, Ltd. Black and white and color illustrations and photos as well as maps throughout. Illustrations, photos and maps are extensively captioned.

What do you think of when you see the words *The First Railroads*? I start thinking about the early railroads in the United States such as the Baltimore & Ohio and their predecessors. I also think about the more familiar railroads in England such as the Liverpool & Manchester and the Stockton & Darlington. It seems that I am getting the cart before the horse if I believe that they are the first in the United States or England. But what about prior to these roads? I also failed to take into account that all railroads were not steam powered but were horse or even people powered.

The author defines the word railway as, "a prepared track that guide vehicles running on it so that they cannot leave the track". With that definition in mind then any structure that guided vehicles would be considered a railway.

The very first railway then would be the stone path with indentations to guide some sort of conveyance to allow transport of materials across the Isthmus of Corinth in Greece in about 600 BC.

There were also carts pulled up inclines via ropes over a prepared track, generally a rut cut into the dirt to ensure the cart arrived at its desired destination. One of these types is known in Austria around 1504.

What about a track made of tree trunks. These existed also with the carts having concave wheels. There were also flat wooden tracks with a space between the tracks where a pin on a cart would ride in order to ensure it stayed on the track.

The next step was to progress from flat wooden tracks to those with strap metal on the top of the wood. From there experiments were made with various forms of all-metal track, from L-shaped iron pieces to cast iron fish-belly pieces to the current design.

Florida Railroads, Seth H Bramson, 128 pages, softcover, 6 1/2 X 9 1/4 format, \$21.99, published by Arcadia Publishing, part of the Postcard History Series of books. Black and white illustrations of postcards throughout.

It seems that I am receiving quite a few books related to Florida although I live in the middle of Iowa. I am guessing that this book was sent to me because it is train related and not because its subject is Florida railroads. Either way, the book is quite interesting in that all of the illustrations are postcards. The majority of the cards presented are of their faces with a few also showing their backs.

The acknowledgements in this volume are the shortest I have ever encountered and read, "All postcards in this book are from

This book starts with the Greek stone railroad and then continues discussing the chronological development of railroads in England. The author also touches on the very early railroads in the United States as well as most of Europe and Russia.

When I realized that this book was more about English railroads I nearly set it aside. I am happy that I did not. There are many instances where the author notes that this or that is a first. I now regret that I did not note these firsts somewhere as I was reading the book. Once I started reading this book I found it difficult to put down. I hope that you will find it is the same for you.

The First Railroads, Atlas of Early Railroads, is available from Firefly Books on their website at:

<https://www.fireflybooks.com/catalogue/adult-books/history/product/11583-the-first-railroads-atlas-of-early-railroads&search=railroads>

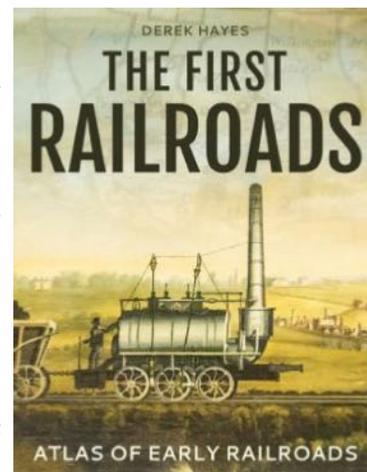
It is available on Amazon in both softcover and hardcover. It is also on Barnes & Noble's website. Hamilton Book's website offers it for \$14.95,

<https://www.hamiltonbook.com/the-first-railroads-atlas-of-early-railroads-paperbound>

the Bramson archive". The introduction somewhat apologizes for not including many more postcards explaining that the size of the book limited the amount of postcards included. The remainder of the introduction briefly touches on Florida railroad history in general. What follows are ten chapters of Florida railroad postcards.

The first six cover: the Atlantic Coast Line, the Florida East Coast Railway – it never was the Florida East Coast Railroad, Seaboard Air Line and Seaboard Coast Line Railroads, the L&N Railroad, Frisco Railway, and Southern Railway, Short Lines, and Industrial, Logging, Mining, and Port Railroads.

Depots and Union Stations are covered in the next two chapters. The author makes it a point to point out the difference between



a depot and a station in the introductory paragraphs of the Depots chapter. The author defines a depot as “a physical building” and a station as a “physical facility or simply a paved or graded or mowed area”. He defines a union station as one that is served by more than one railroad although that is not the case in all instances.

There are ten pages in the chapter on Florida’s Street and Electric Railways. He is unapologetic about including postcards of this type and states his logic for their inclusion in the book. Did you know that the last railroad-owned animal-powered trolley car operation in America was owned by the Florida East Coast?

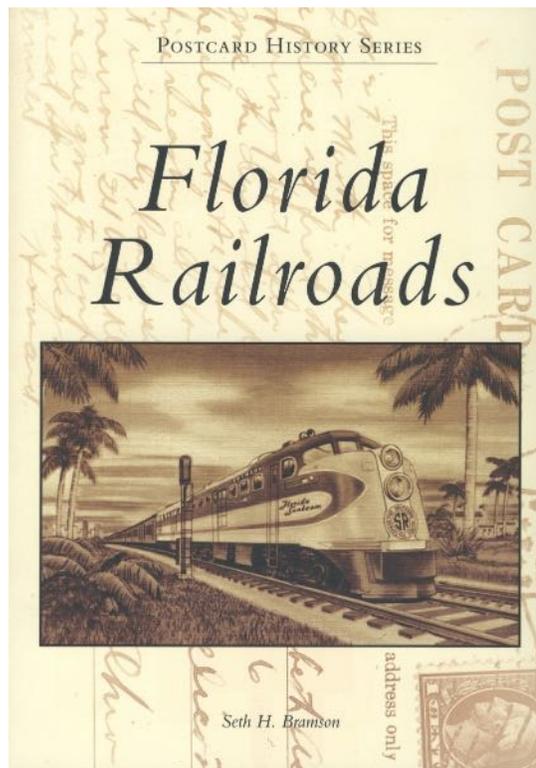
The author concludes the book with a chapter displaying postcards of Tourist Roads, Museums, and Tourist Attractions. Sadly the postcards show defunct attractions except for some Disney postcards.

This book was a unique view of Florida railroads. I enjoyed my time with it and I hope that you will also.

Florida Railroads is available directly from the publisher. A direct link to the book is:

<https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/Products/9781467103640>

Barnes and Noble’s website lists it at the publisher’s price. The website also lists a Nook edition at \$11.49. I found it on Amazon as both a hard copy and in Kindle format at \$21.99 and \$12.99, respectively.



WANTED TO BUY AMERICAN FLYER S GAUGE TRAINS

American Flyer by Gilbert

American Flyer by Lionel

Common Boxed Item

One Piece or Complete Collections

Plasticville Complete Boxed Sets

Sets must have all internal dividers

Contact:

Steve (PCA #02-175) or Judy Hajash, P.O. Box 5, Augusta, West Virginia 26704-0005

Phone 304 359-2194 9:00 AM – 11:00PM Eastern time, 7 days

Leave a message on the answering machine if we do not pick up.

We will return your call.

Questions – call or email judyp@atlanticbb.net

THE VILLAGER CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

Ending March 2020

Fifty pieces of complete boxed Plasticville for sale as a group only, including some rare items. Prices is \$350 plus shipping. No List. Call for details. Bob Hooper, Dominion Models, PO BOX 515 Salem VA 24153. Telephone: (540) 375-3750.

Ending December 2020

Plasticville collection for sale, over 500 pieces, excellent to mint condition, hard to find pieces all boxed. No Duplicates. Ask for more information. #01-77 Gary Mosholder, 186 Pine Springs Camp Road Boswell, PA 15531.

WANTED

Ending March 2020

Need green plastic Christmas tree for Royal and/or NOMA Hard plastic snowman or Santa's Vintage 1950s Christmas decoration. #10-626 Bryan Bennett, 759 Turj Ave NE, Palm Bay, FL 32907 Ph. 321-725-5973.

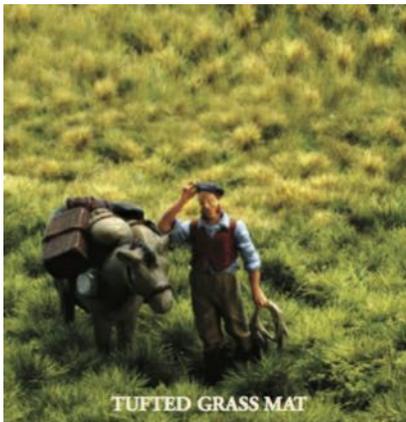
LITTLETOWN: farmer's wife, seated man, man with grip, cream roof sign for General Store, Loading Platform grey smokestack yellow roof support, red Railroad Station Roof sign, Spruce tree, Boulevard light, red trash can, red mailbox, telephone pole.
PLASTICVILLE: complete Maple trees. #00-03 John Niehaus, 601 SE Second St, Ankeny, IA 50021 Ph. 515-771-6888
johnln@netins.net.

FOR TRADE

Ending June 2020

FOR TRADE: My marbled water tank, hobo shacks, watchman's shanty, and railroad work car pieces. Pieces you need for what I need. #00-03 John Niehaus, 601 SE Second St, Ankeny, IA 50021 Ph. 515-771-6888 johnln@netins.net.

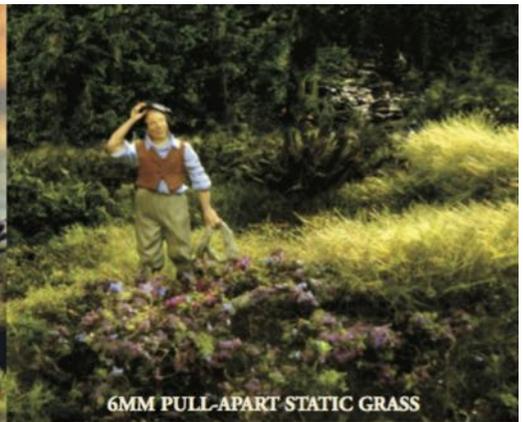
FOR TRADE: Your citizens molded in color for my citizens molded in color. #11-682 Matt Harvazinski, 4115 W. Ave. J7, Lancaster CA, 93536. Ph. 518-421-1130 villagereditor@plasticvilleusa.org



TUFTED GRASS MAT



2MM PULL-APART STATIC GRASS



6MM PULL-APART STATIC GRASS

SCENESCAPES® LANDSCAPING PRODUCTS

REALISTIC-LOOKING SCENERY HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER!

Bachmann's latest *ScenesCAPES*® landscaping products let you quickly add distinctive details and natural-looking textures to any scale layout. Professional, realistic-looking scenery has never been easier!



TUFTED GRASS MAT (one 11.75" x 7.5" sheet)
MSRP \$28.95 each



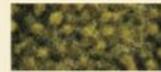
LIGHT GREEN
Item No. 32921



MEDIUM GREEN
Item No. 32922



WESTERN RANGE
Item No. 32924



DRY GRASS
Item No. 32925



2MM PULL-APART STATIC GRASS (one 11" x 5.5" expandable sheet)
MSRP \$16.95 each



LIGHT GREEN
Item No. 31011



MEDIUM GREEN
Item No. 31012



DRY GRASS
Item No. 31014



GOLD
Item No. 31015



6MM PULL-APART STATIC GRASS (one 11" x 5.5" expandable sheet)
MSRP \$16.95 each



WILD GRASS
(medium green with gold highlights)
Item No. 31001



DARK GREEN
(dark green with subtle gold highlights)
Item No. 31002



ALPINE GREEN
(dark green with subtle gold highlights and blown leaves)
Item No. 31003



6MM TUFTS (100 pieces)
MSRP \$10.95 each



MEDIUM GREEN
Item No. 31031



DARK GREEN
Item No. 31032



TAN
Item No. 31033



YELLOW and RED
Item No. 31034



WHITE and BURGUNDY
Item No. 31035



10MM TUFTS (50 pieces)
MSRP \$12.95 each



LIGHT GREEN
Item No. 31041



MEDIUM GREEN
Item No. 31042



TAN
Item No. 31044



YELLOW and RED
Item No. 31045



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