



# THE VILLAGER

The Official Newsletter of the Plasticville Collectors Association  
Volume 21 April 2022 Number 1

## LIRIODENDRON MANSION

JIM BENNETT

When my oldest daughter got married her ceremony and reception took place at an old mansion turned wedding venue in Bel Air, Maryland called the Liriodendron Mansion. The estate was built in 1898 by one of the founding doctors of Johns Hopkins Medical College. It was a gorgeous building and I couldn't help but think how much it resembled the Plasticville Colonial Mansion. If you've ever been there, or Google it, you'll see what I mean. So, to commemorate the occasion on my next Christmas platform, I converted the Plasticville Mansion into the wedding venue.

I used foam board and wooden dowels for the veranda and railings, miniature potted plants (from Hobby Lobby) and long, green pipe cleaners for ivy. For chairs I cut extrusions of Plastruct and glued them together. I used the K-Line bride and groom figures. For the wedding party and seated guests I bought them in bulk on eBay. I was pleased with effect and when my daughter and new son-in-law visited for Christmas they were overjoyed!



### The Villager

Published quarterly by the Plasticville Collectors Association.

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## EDITOR'S COLUMN



This first edition of 2022 is filled with some great articles by new writers. I received a number of submissions since the last newsletter and am very happy to include some of their work in this issue. Look for more articles in the next issue. These articles serve as great samples on what you could contribute to *The Villager*. I would like to see more work on kit-bashed and custom pieces, I know we have some very talented readers out there. It just takes a couple of photos (with your smartphone) and a short paragraph to get your work featured in *The Villager*, so please keep the articles coming!

Matt Harvazinski, *The Villager* Editor

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# A FERRY TALE

ERIC MALGREN

If you have ever spent any time in Seattle, then you know that if you can see Puget Sound odds are you are going to see a Washington State Ferry. From downtown, boats run to Bremerton and Winslow. Further north there's Edmonds – Kingston. From West Seattle, it's Fauntleroy – Vashon – Southworth. They are the lifeline between Seattle and the Olympic Peninsula. The nearest bridge crosses the Narrows in Tacoma, 45 minutes to the south – on a good day. The next nearest bridge, across Deception Pass, is about is around 2 hours to the north. It will only get you onto Whidby Island. You still need to take a ferry from the other end of the island to reach Port Townsend at the north end of the peninsula. In the late fifties there were plans to build a bridge from Fauntleroy across Vashon to Southworth. A friend had a long promotional illustration of it hanging in his garage. That was 1960 and I remember asking about it. My friend's dad told me they had decided not to build it. I have long since learned that state house had twice approved funding, but the state senate let the bill die in committee in the spring of 1959. So ferries it was (and still is) and I grew up watching them come and go from the beach and bluffs of West Seattle's Lincoln Park.

1959, that was the Christmas I received my train set. About 6 months later my dad and I carried a 4x8 sheet of plywood home a mile and a half on foot for my first layout (we had no car). I painted it gloss green with gloss black roadbed. Bare board roads led to the intersections of a Lesney Matchbox R-1 Roadway (the original streets only version, no bridges). My American Flyer girder bridge demanded a construction paper stream and pond. Since ferries had been a part of life for as long as my 8 year old brain could remember, I proceeded to use some lined paper to make a couple of small boats for my small pond. Neither was big enough to haul one of my Matchbox cars, but they plied the pond until the board moved from my bedroom to the basement where it took on the first of several different transformations.

The place for ferries on the layout disappeared (too many Plasticville structures). However, my fascination with them didn't. I find the little wooden souvenirs/ornaments depicting a Washington State ferry cool. Bigger than my



original paper creations they are too small even for n gauge. Consequently they just won't work with my trains. Alas, no ferries. Then in early 2017 I was checking out Just Imagine Toys



in Baraboo, Wisconsin shortly after we moved there. The shop is okay if you are looking for those metal cars that show up on a lot of O gauge layouts or for individual pieces of track for your wooden trains, but is as it claims to be, a toy shop not a hobby shop. All of a sudden, there it was, a ferry boat. It was big. It was plastic. Better yet, it was green and white just like the Washington State ferries.

Manufactured by Green Toys, it came with a pair of plastic cars which are way too big for Plasticville.



However, the deck, the cabin and the doors looked pretty

close. It was also \$25, way more than I was willing to put out for something I had no immediate use for. Back on the shelf it went.

Back, but not forgotten. We returned to the Seattle area (Tacoma to be specific) in 2019 to be with our elderly mothers. As I started planning what to do with the trains when we got back to Baraboo my mind went back to the Green Toys ferry. This time I would find a way to work it in. But, where do I get it? And, could I get it any cheaper? I started with their website. The ferry was the only thing of interest. \$29. Amazon varied but everyone was the same \$20 - \$25 range. eBay was no better. Even if the price was lower, the postage brought it back up. Fred Meyer started stocking Green Toys during that time. \$16.95, still more than I wanted to pay at that point. I decided to hold out. I figured one would eventually turn up in a thrift store.

Thrift stores in the northwest are not exactly havens for toy trains. New Bright sets turn up from time-to-time. There is the occasional HO piece. If you want wooden train parts and you are willing to do some serious rummaging, the junk bins at the Goodwill Outlet are a good place to look. I have had some luck though, like the time I found a Bachmann On30 set for \$10 on a chance visit to a Goodwill near Gig Harbor. The thrift stores and yard sales here in Baraboo have proven to be more fruitful. Anyway, early last summer we were at our local Tacoma Value Village. I can't remember why we were there. My wife was looking for something. As she shopped, I wandered. Toys, books, holiday decorations, etc., etc., etc. I was making my second saunter through the toys when it I saw it. There, on the top shelf, just above eye level, was my Green Toys ferry. The color was wrong. This one was blue and white and there were a couple of small red stains on it. However, at \$3 I was not going to leave it sitting there.

The ferry is a simple tub toy manufactured in the states from recycled milk jugs. It has only four pieces, the hull, car deck, passenger deck and a pull out ramp for getting vehicles to and from the floor. "Green Toys Ferry" is molded into the sides car deck. As a toy train piece the deck is large enough to hold four Plasticville/Marx/K-line vehicles and there are slits to keep them from rolling. There is adequate clearance on this level for O gauge plastic people. Moving to the passenger deck, the doors are a little short for the figures, but as can be seen from the photos, not offensively so. All in all, if you're looking

for a ferry that fits in with your classic post war structures, I see this one as a very good bet.



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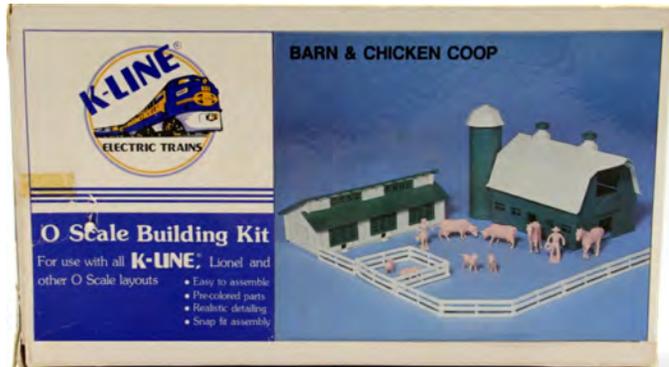
# Box 5.5

## A Newly Discovered K-Line Building/Accessory Box

DONALD W. HUOVINEN



This is in the category of just when you think you know everything, something unexpected comes along. In this case the unexpected occurred when I was looking at a K-4132 Barn & Chicken Coop I had recently purchased and was documenting it for my inventory. Much to my surprise the box was new to me. In order to fit it into the box numbering sequence I have previously established I will refer to this box as Type 5.5.



Front

At first glance the Box looks like a Type 9. So much so that I need to re-examine my Type 9 boxes to see if they are in fact a Type 5.5. The new box is based upon the Type 5 box which I had speculated might have been a generic “emergency” box used until proper pre-printed boxes could be acquired. Note that the Type 5 box was the first to use the text “For use with all K-LINE, Lionel and other O Scale layouts” This new box perhaps shows more ingenuity by K-Line as the photo of the item is actually a large color sticker affixed to the right 60% of the front of the box which extends over halfway down the right end of the box which identifies the item included in the box. This is similar to the sticker used on the Type 2 box however the logo has been updated to the round blue and yellow logo. In essence this is a Type 5 box with a much larger sticker. Unless one actually feels the box it is very difficult to tell that the picture is not printed on the box. Otherwise the front of the box looks identical to that of a Type 9 box. Additional differences which differentiate this box from a



Back

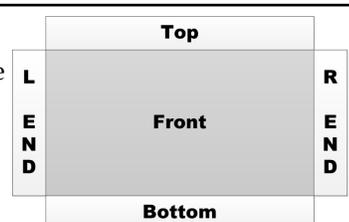
Type 9 box are as follows: On the back of the box in the upper right corner the address is given as “MDK, Inc. Chapel Hill, NC 27514”. The ZIP code has yet to be changed and there is no mention of a country of origin, therefore it can be assumed that these items were manufactured in the U.S. Also the Church continues to be listed as 4110 Church even though the 4110 Church had been superseded by the 4111 Church in the 1983 catalog.

This box is certainly unusual and for the sake of completeness the highlights/details of the box are as follows. These are items that change as the boxes change:

- The box has a white background.
- The newer round K-LINE ELECTRIC TRAINS logo is printed in the upper left corner of the front of the box. The locomotive is blue and yellow. This logo is the same as that appearing on the front cover of the 1987 catalog.
- On the lower left portion of the box front the item is described as being a “Full O Scale Building Kit/“For use with all K-LINE, Lionel and other O Scale layouts/Easy to assemble/Snap fit assembly/Pre-colored parts/Realistic detailing”. The reference to Lionel has returned.

### Common Box Lingo

- Front - Largest side with the most detail describing the contents
- Back - Largest side opposite the front
- Ends - Vertical surfaces on the right & left of the front





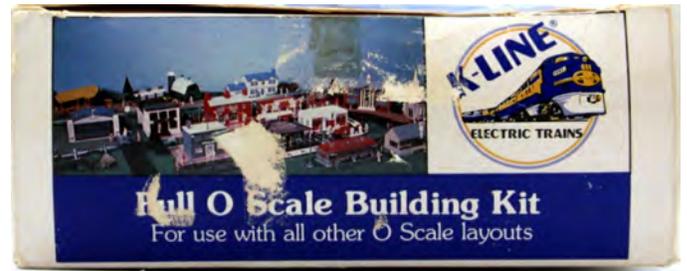
Top

- The logo/text portion on the left side of the front is a larger percentage: 40%.
- There is a large color sticker affixed to the right 60% of the front of the box which extends over halfway down the right end of the box which identifies the item included in the box. The item description only is on the front of the box. The Item Number and Description are on the right end of the box.
- On the right end the aforementioned sticker extends down two-thirds and has the item photo, description, item number, and the K-LINE ELECTRIC TRAINS logo.
- The left of the box has a small photo of K-LINEVILLE along with the newer K-LINE ELECTRIC TRAINS logo.
- The top of the box contains illustrations of the Diner and Street Lights and Accessories as well as an illustration of a Track Layout and Accessory Manual. The newer K-LINE ELECTRIC TRAINS logo is on the left side.
- The bottom of the box contains illustrations of the L-Shaped Ranch House, Figures with paint, and Animals with paint. The newer K-LINE ELECTRIC TRAINS logo is on the left side.
- The back of the box contains illustrations of twelve buildings different buildings under a blue banner with white text reading, "K-LINEVILLE O Scale Building Kits Make Your Layouts Fun and Realistic." with the same newer logo as on the top of the box in the upper left hand corner.
- The address is given as "MDK, Inc. Chapel Hill, NC 27514". The ZIP code has yet to be changed to 27515.
- There is no mention of a country of origin, therefore it can be assumed that these items were manufactured in the U.S.



Bottom

- As previously stated, 12 buildings are illustrated on the back of the box. The church is still listed as 4110 Church even though the 4110 Church had been superseded by the 4111 Church in the 1983 catalog.
- The box is 12" x 6 3/4" x 2 3/4"



Left End



Right End

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](mailto:dhuov@aol.com).

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# PIECING TOGETHER THE PAST ONE YEAR AT A TIME

TIMOTHY PRICE

This story actually begins in 1950, but for me personally, I started piecing together the past in November of 1996. In my opinion, Vintage Plasticville and Vintage American Flyer Trains fit together much like a puzzle on my holiday layout, and believe it or not, I just recently built and finished my 22nd layout/puzzle in the 26 years that I have been collecting Plasticville and operating American Flyer trains.

My parents purchased a 5005WT Pennsylvania K-5 American Flyer freight train set back in 1950. I remember playing with it back in the 50's and 60's when I was a child, but it was always my dad and my older brother who would set it up. I just never took much of an interest in trains back then.

My parents had tried for years to get me to take and set up their American Flyer train set that had been sitting idle in their attic for over 20 years, but at that time, I did not have any desire to get involved with trains. However, in November of 1996, with my daughter being 13 and my son just turning 10, I decided that it was now or never. The rest is history, because now I am a 67-year-old kid who is hooked on collecting vintage Plasticville and operating and collecting vintage American Flyer trains.

I started out with only 5 American Flyer operating accessory buttons, 5 rolling stock cars, and 2 engines. It also came with a few pieces of Plasticville: a RU-4 Dairy Farm, 1616 Suburban station, 1615 Water Tank, 1403 Signal Bridge, and an 1806 Roadside Stand. In addition, a Marx Sunshine Farm miniature playset, a girder bridge, a tunnel, some trees, vehicles, and some Marx telephone poles were also in the box that I received from my parents.

My layout is generally only up for two to three months during the Thanksgiving/Christmas Holiday Season. My

wife, Doreen, is very supportive and cooperative in letting me use her laundry room for that long. I try to start building my layout during the Thanksgiving weekend and generally try to finish it during the last week in December, first week in January. Hopefully I can get it done by Christmas in the future now that I have just recently retired. I generally start taking my layout down during the end of February, first of March.



Each year I try to add a new piece or two of vintage Plasticville and/ or American Flyer to my layout/puzzle. I now have at least 21 American Flyer operating control buttons, 41 rolling stock cars and 5 engines not to mention the countless number of vintage Plasticville kits, units and accessories that I have added over the years. I even have 3 Marx accessories on my layout and a few Littleton and Ideal structures that I add and subtract from my layout depending on the year and how I want my layout to look. My track is all vintage American Flyer S gauge 2 rail track.

What was once a small puzzle with a few cars and accessories is now a much larger puzzle with many more pieces. In a typical year, 90-95% of my American Flyer accessories fit quite nicely on my 108" x 70" layout, however, only 60-70% of my Plasticville kits can fit on my layout. The ones that don't fit in this year may get a chance to fit in the next year because I try to change my track arrangement and layout design every year.

I personally feel good about myself and get a sense of accomplishment if everything fits, works and runs well when my yearly layout is complete. In fact, my biggest enjoyment besides looking for, collecting and adding new pieces to my puzzle, is putting up and taking down my layout each year.

My scenery is mainly my American Flyer, Marx and Plasticville units and accessories along with many colorful American Flyer cars that I add to my layout. My vehicles consist mainly of Plasticville, but I also have vintage vehicles from Renwal, Manoil, Acme, Processed Plastic Co., Tootsietoy, Lido, and Ideal mixed in. My figures are mainly Plasticville, but I also have some postwar Gilbert American Flyer and Marx figures on my layout.





I am all about the colors and the play value of my layout and am happy just throwing two green sheets on top of my extended ping pong table each year and then pulling the accessory wires under my sheets to my one ~30" x 16" control board and making my toy train layout somewhat resemble a working railroad.

My compact layout "packs a punch" for two to three months each year but then I take it apart, box it up, and let it rest in the attic until the turkey gobbles or the whistles blow to signal it is time to get the trains up and moving again. Each year a new challenge awaits me because I am always either changing the track arrangement, accessory location or adding new pieces to the puzzle.

This year, I brought down 12 boxes and containers from my attic on 12/11/2021. My 2021-2022 layout consists of 18 American Flyer operating control buttons. On this layout, there are 50 accessories, and all but 7 are vintage postwar American Flyer.

Of the seven, one is a 401 Signal Bridge from the Jr. Bridge Company that I acquired and added this year. I also have 26 Plasticville units or kits on this layout plus numerous smaller, miscellaneous Plasticville items. I finished this layout on 1/15/2022, but



there are years that I can finish my layout in two weeks depending upon how much time I spend on it.

My 2014-2015 layout consisted mainly of Plasticville kits and accessories, with a couple of Littletown and Ideal units and accessories mixed in. I actually counted 45 Plasticville kits on this layout! There were a few American Flyer accessories on this layout, but no American Flyer operating accessories that required control buttons. Plasticville "won out" in 2014!

Besides thoroughly enjoying this hobby, I do it in honor and remembrance of my dad. He loved seeing me set up and run his and now my trains.

He always had a twinkle in his eye when he was around my layout, and though he passed in 2000, I know that he looks forward



to every Christmas so that he can watch us run his trains again. Our two granddaughters also love playing with and watching my trains and accessories run and operate. They are also very intrigued by all of the colorful Plasticville buildings and units as well as the farm animals, pool and playground accessories.

If I had to pick, I would have to say that my two favorite finds in looking for and collecting Plasticville and other vintage Plastic units and accessories are when I came across a very nicely boxed and complete, Make and Play, No. 198 Jr. Chief Fire Department set. The only thing that it was missing was the logo on the fire helmet pencil sharpener. I am also very partial to my Ideal Diner and the inside graphics and contents of this piece, I just recently came across two boxed units that are also very special and new to me. I was not aware that a Style LC-2 Log Cabin came in two different sized boxes. The one that I recently purchased had a box height of 2.5" versus what I thought was a normal 1.5" high box. I also came across a Style 1-C Christmas Fence and Gate box with great graphics and there was also a step up green platform in the bottom of the box that included some nice clean, white fence. What a find! Needless to say, these two units are now in my collection!

There will always be missing pieces to my puzzle, but that to me is what makes this hobby and collecting Plasticville so exciting and enjoyable--finding another piece, or color or box that looks and fits even better. So as I like to say, it's time to get to work to find another missing piece. Happy Hunting!

## K-LINE KRONICLES

### K-Line #K-4221 Daily Whistle Newspaper Building and #K-4221A Add-A-Floor



ED BERG

**K**-Line had started out its line of buildings by simply re-issuing the old Marxville line of buildings but with new signs that said "K-LINEVILLE" to replace all of the "MARXVILLE" signs and mostly new colors. Then they made a foray into hybrids: old Marxville buildings with all new O-scale facades featuring new businesses with all new graphics. Then in 1987 came a much bolder move: full O-scale building kits using all new tooling. K-Line issued four 2-story buildings each with its own 'add-a-floor' expansion kit to allow the builder to make buildings as tall as they wanted. The four kits and four add-a-floor kits were as follows:

- K-Line #K-4221 K-Lineville "Daily Whistle" Newspaper
- K-Line #K-4221A K-Lineville "Daily Whistle" Newspaper Building Add-A-Floor
- K-Line #K-4222 First National Bank
- K-Line #K-4222A First National Bank Add-a-Floor
- K-Line #K-4223 K-Lineville Pharmacy
- K-Line #K-4223A K-Lineville Pharmacy Add-a-Floor
- K-Line #K-4224 "Chez Lillian" Restaurant
- K-Line #K-4224A "Chez Lillian" Restaurant Add-A-Floor

Like so many other things with K-Line, quality control and basic design left a little to be desired and the results were mixed, sometimes you didn't get all the pieces you were supposed to and sometimes you got extra. The concept of adding additional floors was sound but there was a glaring flaw in the design. Each basic kit had a ground floor base and a 'second floor' base. Each add-a-floor kit also included a base on which to assemble the walls. Here's the kicker: the inter-floor bases had slots on the top and the bottom meant to accept the tabs located on the tops and the bottoms of each wall. Simple

right? Except that the tabs on the tops of the walls don't line up with the slots in the bottoms of the base plates! Here's what I discovered: only the rear wall *top* tabs would line up with the slots *underneath* the base plate. The side and front wall *top* tabs will not line up with the slots on the *bottom* of the base plates for the floor above. Rotating the base didn't help. Flipping the base upside down didn't help. I've taken several different kits apart and have found this to be true in all of them. What was my work a-round? Well, I left the rear wall tabs in place because they lined up, but I cut off the tabs from the tops of the side and front walls. This way I could still line up additional floors with no problems because the rear wall tabs/slots were in-place and the extra floors stayed together quite nicely.

One other thing I thought was disappointing was the lack of any detailing on the rear walls. They're just bare plastic walls without even a hint of brickwork and no windows so in a future build I hope to add doors and fire escapes.

This first building I did for my inprogress train layout was an experiment to see how well it would fit the layout and it has a small enough footprint to fit in my limited space just fine. The basic building measures 7"W x 7 1/8"D x 7 3/4"H (to top of roof). When you add one 'add-a-floor'



it's 11 1/4" H. I ended up with two extra floors and may add another one as well for that Big City look I'm going after.

Figures and accessories included in kit: None

Enjoy!

Ed "ICE" Berg, Las Vegas, NV








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# K-LINE STATUE OF LIBERTY



DONALD W. HUOVINEN

The Statue of Liberty, K-4193 (Photo 1), was first cataloged in 1982 as part of K-Line's Historical Buildings. The Statue of Liberty would continue to be cataloged through 1988, when the Historical Buildings were dropped. The statue itself was molded in a bright copper color, and was situated on a light tan pedestal. This was packaged in a Type 2 box (Photo 2).



Photo 1

In the 2002 First Edition catalog, K-Line introduced, and pictured, K-41932, Statue of Liberty on Base (Photo 3). This was one of a series of built-up buildings introduced that year.



Photo 3



Photo 2

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. This would be cataloged through the 2004 First Edition catalog. The Statue of Liberty featured a lighted torch and crown. This Statue with the lights illuminated is shown in Photo 4. The statue itself was verdigris (the color of copper patina); the pedestal was brown, and sat on a cast resin base shaped in an 11 point star. The base was painted gray and brown. The accessory was tall:



Photo 4

approximately 14". Impressive. However if built to actual scale the accessory would be 6' tall. This accessory was packaged in Type 12 window display box (Photo 5).

"Also Available" in the 2002 First Edition catalog, but not pictured, was K-41931 Statue of Liberty Kit (Photo 6). It would be cataloged through the 2005 First Edition catalog. This kit was similar to K-4193 previously offered however the statue was now colored verdigris. This version was packaged in a distinctive Type 5 Header Bag (Photos 7 and 8). Note that K-Line was to make a donation to the Red Cross for each model sold.

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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Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

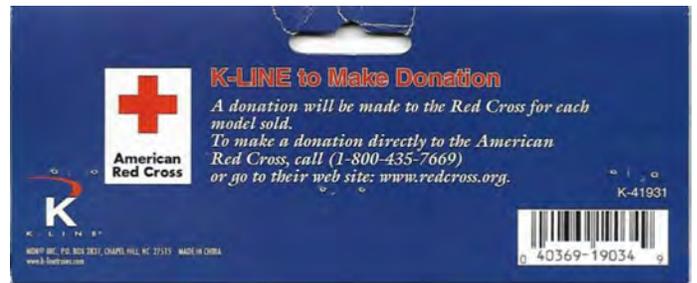


Photo 8

**Hunting for strange and unusual Plasticville.**

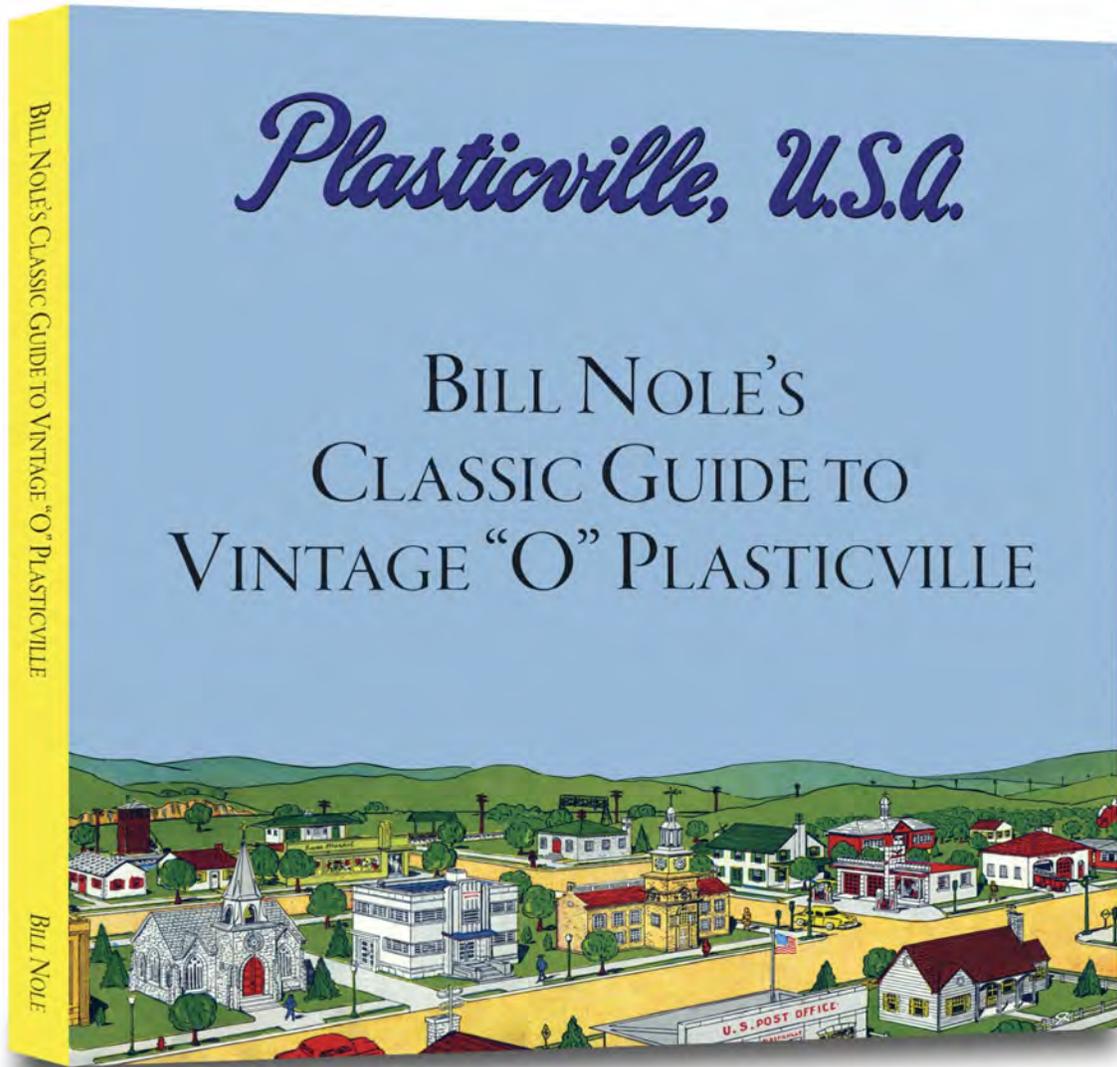


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# MAD CITY TRAIN SHOW

ERIC MALGREN

Okay, so I'm a little crazy. The Madison, Wisconsin Mad City Railroad Show and Sale back in February was my first swap meet in four years and only my second Mad City event. The first was in 2017. In 2018 I and the rest of the family were down with a nasty case of the flu the weekend of the meet. We settled for an alternative in Onalaska, WI the following month. When it was time for the Mad City show in 2019, we were packing up to move back to Washington where, for my money, the Boeing Employees Swap Meet held every November in Kent (mid-way between Seattle and Tacoma) is the event of choice. No layouts there, at least during my most recent visits, just sellers. The fall 2019 event fell on a bad weekend for us. In 2020 it was cancelled because of Covid. The Northwest is not great when it comes to finding American Flyer or Plasticville, but the Boeing Swap Meet is still a good bet to find something. So when their web site announced the November 2021 was on the schedule, I was all geared up to go. Alas, November rolled around and we were packing for our return to Wisconsin.

My first Wisconsin train shows back in 2017 and 2018 had decent amounts of both AF and Pville at what I would consider reasonable prices. Consequently, when the 2022 Mad City meet came around I could hardly contain myself. It was a clear, cold Saturday morning and my daughter and I made sure to arrive early. With the temperature hovering at 9 degrees, we were thankful the lobby was already open. Inside there were a number of displays and small layouts to entertain us before the visitors were allowed into the main arena. Once we did get in, I was not disappointed (Well, maybe a little bit. At the top of my wish list was a Marklin HO coach. But, that is another story). There were Plasticville structures scattered throughout the dealer tables, including several master sets in nice boxes. Another dealer, one with a lot of American Flyer, also had a table of boxed PV structures. It was the

Plasticville Collectors Association tables that really caught my eye. Now, they had a representative with a couple of tables at the event back in 2017 and he also had a table when my daughter and I attended the meet in Onalaska. But this time – well, I have never seen so much Plasticville in one place in my entire life. Maybe some of the bigger



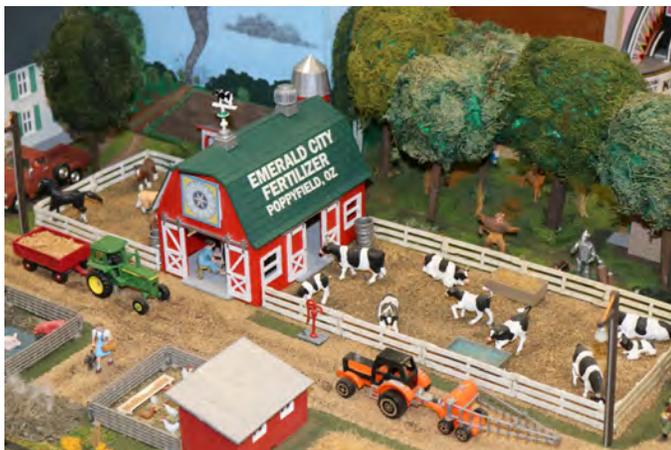
meets back east have more, but for this Washingtonian...wow! Three tables, a box of spare pieces, and a lot of boxes behind the counter that the gentleman was using to fill spaces that became vacant. A row of churches for \$1. Cape cods were \$2 and there was no shortage of either. I saw a couple of red and of white telephone poles. If you were looking for a particular piece, it was probably there somewhere. Like, for example, the Littletown grocery (with glue residue but complete) for \$6.50 that I immediately grabbed. There was also a bag of picket fence with the separate posts. I always called this fence platform fence because it looks so much like the wrought iron platform fencing at the King Street Station in Seattle. As such, that is what I use it for. At last, the end of my fencing along the rails would no longer be left hanging in the air.

I was not disappointed with what I found for American Flyer either. There were a couple of things I have been watching for that turned up at amazingly low prices. I found another piece that has always cost more than I am willing to pay for something I intend to just run on my layout. There was no price sticker on it. When I asked how much, I was shocked. He quoted me a price that was 60% of what I was willing to put out. And it was in nice shape too. Since he had at least two tables of Flyer, I figured had some knowledge of what he was selling. I asked no more questions and gave him the money.

I did not spend a lot of time with the layouts. I am into toy trains and the highly detailed scale layouts are fun to look



at, but involve far more in terms of time and money than I am willing to invest. I was fascinated with a small N gauge display in the lobby. What caught my eye was not the trains but the operating bus route. Conspicuous by their absence were the O gauge and Lego layouts. Thomas and friends were represented in the Wisconsin Garden Railway display, but I did not notice any Thomas for sale, which is not to say there wasn't any, it was just that none popped out at me and I have been a big Thomas fan since the first VCR tape came out and my then 2 year old son watched it over and over and over and...



I spent a lot of time at Ron Schlicht's American Flyer Trains display. As layouts go, it is as much a tribute to Plasticville as it is to Flyer. Clearly geared to the general populace (read families with kids) it is a great promoter of toy trains as well. I am not big on kit bashing, but I really like what he has done. I walked around trying to take pictures of everything so that I could sit back later and take a good look at his work. The effort proved difficult - just too many people and too many things to draw their attention. Movie characters are scattered through out the scenes. Most of the buildings have been redone. The hardware store is now a True Value. The TV station is WKRP. The dime store is a Woolworth. The grocery is a Piggly Wiggly. A tornado has been added to the backdrop of the farm scene. I located Dorothy, Toto, the Tin Man and the Cowardly Lion. I went back and reviewed Ron's series of articles that appeared in volumes 14 thru 17 of the Newsletter. In volume 17, issue 3, he explains why the extra effort with the structures on the traveling layout and includes several examples of his changes. There are a



couple of dozen pictures on the Badgerland S Gaugers website showing how the layout looked before the miniature community got its facelift.

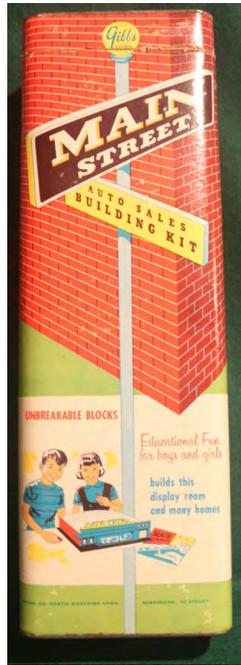
My daughter and I kind of went our separate ways when we got into the main hall. She would text me from time to time if she saw something she thought I might be interested in and we connected on several occasions and talked about our finds. However, for the most part we did our own thing. One of her hobbies is repainting action figures so naturally she was drawn to "the layout with all the little super heroes." With all those carefully painted identifiable little people there was one character she was sure had to be there somewhere. Unfortunately, because the crowd made getting a good close look at everything difficult, she gave up her search.

So, Ron, there is at least one inquisitive mind that wants to know – Where IS Waldo?

# GIBBS AUTOMATIC MOLDING CORP. AUTO SALES BUILDING

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

I acquired this building, probably fifteen years ago, with the intent of acquiring the other buildings in the series. The series was named *Main Street* by Gibbs Toys and was packaged in a rectangular tube similar to Block City packaging. See photo 1. Per the instruction manual included with this building there were five different sized sets with each set dedicated to a specific type of business. The instruction manual front cover shows all five buildings. See photo 2. It was my intent to acquire all five buildings and then write an article related to all of them. In the many years since I acquired this piece I have seen only one additional piece come up on eBay. I bid on it but eventually dropped out when the bids went into three figures. That was probably six or seven years ago.



Gibbs Automatic Moulding Company and Tri-State Plastic Molding Company were separate businesses.



As I noted above, there were five sets in the series: MS 295 Shoe Shop, MS 395 Bakery, MS 495 Auto Sales, MS 595 Supermarket, and MS 750, Theatre. The numbers after the letters MS are the same as the prices listed in the included instruction manual.

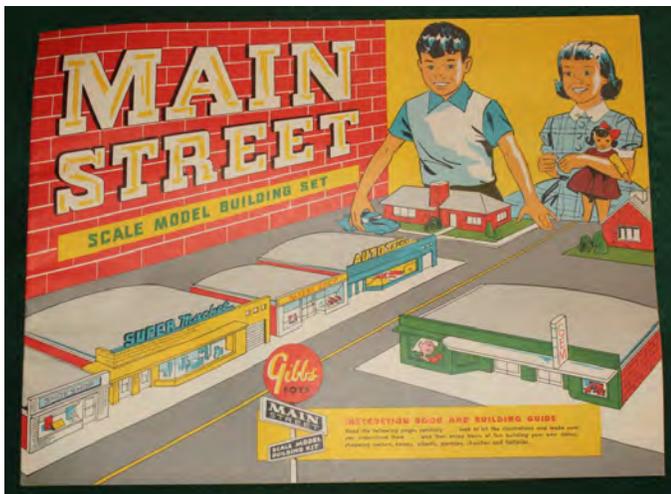
Each building came with a sign identifying its purpose. The two smallest, the Shoe Shop and Bakery seems to have had adhesive signs to add to the fronts of those buildings. The Auto Sales and the Supermarket had add on signs that were attached to the front wall. The Theater had a vertical sign attached to the awning. The front pieces for the Auto Sales and the Supermarket were identical but in different colors. The other three buildings had their own unique fronts.

These all seem to have been rather large buildings at approximately 1/32 scale. The front of the Auto Sales building scales out at approximately 42' wide X 13' high. The sign on the roof is 28' 7" wide X almost 3' 7" high. See photo 3. The service (people) doors scale out at approximately 9' high X 3' 6" wide. The garage door is a generous 11' 6" wide X 9' 6" high.

There is a note on the canister in which the building is stored that the blocks are "unbreakable". They are similar in feel to the blocks made by Auburn, soft and rubbery. The single blocks in the kit are approximately 2' 6" wide X 1' 4" wide X 1' 4" high. See photo 4.

The front of my Auto Sales building is deep blue and the Auto Sales sign is a bright yellow. I am presuming that the Super Market front and sign were the reverse colors. The Theater front was green and the Shoe Shop and Bakery had white fronts per the instruction manual cover.

My piece came with a cardstock simulated roof with ventilators and a skylight. Photo 5 is a partial view of the roof material. It has been in the container for a long period of



Gibbs Automatic Moulding Company was organized On January 4, 1956 by Robert K. Gibbs, company president, to conduct "diversified plastic moulding operation together with a fully integrated business of die casting zinc and aluminum with complete plating facilities." From what I have been able to determine the business was in Henderson, Kentucky. This is the same city in which the Block City building blocks were last made by Tri-State Plastic Molding Company. Research leads me to believe that

time and I was concerned with causing damage if I attempted to unroll it. My presumption is that all others came with the same design roof but only in the size required for the subject building.

As an aside; The instruction manual, in addition to listing all of the available buildings also note a Custer's Last Stand set. That set seems to be fairly common when I performed a Google search using the text string "custer's last stand gibbs", without the quotes. I did not find any on eBay. The figures in the set are only semi-three dimensional. Most listings note the figures as flat.



## WHAT MEMBERS ARE SAYING

---

Is the Salmon ranch house a different color than the Peach cape cod? I have one of each, and they appear to be the same color!

Charles Mombleau -longtime PCA member

They are the same color. Why one is peach and the other is salmon is just the way the initial catalogs noted them

Just finished reading your article about Block City. Brought back lots of memories. I used Block City to make various buildings to use with my trains when I was a child. Of course scale didn't mean anything. How can it when Lionel's gateman towered above the trains? I also used Lincoln Logs, American Logs (like Lincoln Logs but the logs were square), Erector sets and American Bricks. And to top it off, I had three Log Cabin Syrup tins that housed some of the citizens in my make believe town. Sure wish I had kept the Log Cabin tins!

Don Huovinen - longtime PCA member

## THE YORK REPORT

MATTHEW HARVAZINSKI

---

The second show since the Pandemic was held in April 2022. The show still did not appear to be attracting a pre-pandemic level of attendance. The PCA met at lunchtime on Friday and had a much larger group in attendance than at the October show. There was a lengthy discussion about some items people brought to share. PCA past president Glenn Bowman was in attendance and provided lots of good information.

In the trading halls, there were plentiful amounts of Plasticville to be found for all budgets. Several dealers were selling complete kits with boxes for \$5-\$20 per kit. There were also multiple dealers with an impressive collection of master unit sets. I enjoy looking at the colorful artwork on these sets. I am not sure how popular these sets are because they take up a large amount of space. You need a large amount of space to store them.

The Red Hall also had a dealer with some impressive rare items, including blister packs and some dealer assortments. These were price competitive to what you might find on eBay. Some dealers are also still living in a fantasy land with their pricing, I imagine we will see those same items on the tables in October.

One recommendation is to always check the kits for completeness, regardless of what the seller says. I found a Littletown church with the box which said "complete". Upon examination, I found it was missing the Star of David (which is always missing!). The seller was also extremely rude about it, I won't be visiting that table again.

Did you find something good at York or another show? Why not send in a photo and a description of what you found.



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## SEEN ALONG THE ROAD

---

The split level in photo was seen by former PCA member Jim Farace while driving through York, PA some time ago. He took a quick picture of it and decided to contact me after seeing another photo of the same house in a Facebook group post. As you can see from the actual photo and a photo of the Plasticville Split Level House they are close to a perfect match. Thank you Jim for sharing your photo.



# A RED STATION PLATFORM

MATTHEW HARVAZINSKI



**B**achmann manufactured the station platform under two numbers, LM-3 and 1200. The early kits (LM-3) are found with a brown platform, green supports and a green roof. Later kits in the 1200 numbered box could also be found with a grey base, brown supports and a brown roof. The example shown above has a very bright red roof, green supports, and a brown base that has a large amount of marbling. You can see the difference in the marbling in the side-by-side photo with the more common green roof.



The lineage of this piece is not known. A red roof has never been identified as a known variation of the platform. We do know that red is sometimes used in injection molding to examine part quality because stress can be easily identified, we also know Bachmann was fond of using clear plastic for mold evaluations. The underside of



the roof shows some differences. Aside from the broken support on the right side, direct your attention to the support structure around the sign slot. The green roof has supports on either side of the sign slot



that have a round indentation, almost as if they were flattened. The red roof has two narrow straight supports, in the same place as the flattened round indentation on the green roof. All other details on the red roof are identical, it is the same size and has the same brick pattern. In this example both the red and green roof appear to have the early narrow slot for the sign.

The large amount of marbling on the base is interesting, but not necessarily unique. You can find different degrees of marbling of the station platform bases. Typically this is a mix of brown and black, this platform clearly has red mixed in with the black and brown. While I could not find a comparable base with a green roof, I had a limited supply to examine, so my search was not exhaustive.

Where does this platform come from? Perhaps you can help by examining your own platforms and writing in with some information:

- Do you have a red roof in your collection?
- Do you have a platform that has large degrees of marbling, particularly with brown, red, and black?
- Do you have a roof underside (of any color) that looks like the red roof, without the flattened sign supports.

The red roof is a striking piece to look at, but unfortunately does not match the the suburban station. Does any one have a suburban station with a red roof!?

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1985 Log Cabin under boxed \$30	45986 LCCA Hangar, \$20 Mint
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45985 LCCA Air Admin Bldg Orange/Blue, \$20 Mint	

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Diner \$8, Colonial Mansion (red roof) \$15, Colonial Church \$15  
KING Add A Floors (red or brown) sealed \$4 each, 3/\$10

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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: original walls, roofs, canopies,  
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(brown or dark grey), Railroad work car: original walls & roof, 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, Cattle Pen: crossbar, Turnpike: white lens holder, 2 lenses(Red or  
Green), Turnpike: white cone 4/\$3, green sign \$3, Post Office: flag \$5, Frosty Bar: stool \$1, Sign \$5

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Airport: windsock, CHIMNEY: Log Cabin, Switch Tower, Loading Platform, Watchman's Shanty,  
Suburban Station, Cape Cod, Ranch House, Factory: railing Colonial Mansion: half chimney, New  
England Ranch: half chimney, ANTENNA: 2 story colonial, New England ranch, Police station, Police  
Station: antenna base WEATHERVANE: Barn, School, Independence Hall, Hospital: siren, Fire  
Department: siren, Barn caps, Church cross, Split Level downspouts, Watchman Shanty light, Bank:  
large or small canopy, House Under Construction: sawhorse (3 pieces)

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

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

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

# BACK IN THE BOX / A CONTINUING SERIES ON REPACKING PLASTICVILLE

## 1625 Railroad Work Car

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

Here's another piece that can be a real problem to get "back in the box" due to its small parts. Place the box in front of you with it open and the top folded away from you.



Photo 1: Place the car floor, face up, in the back left corner of the box.



Photo 2: Place the back wall, face up, on top of the floor.



Photo 3: Place the front wall, face up, on top of the back wall.



Photo 4: Place both end walls, face down, on top of the front wall.



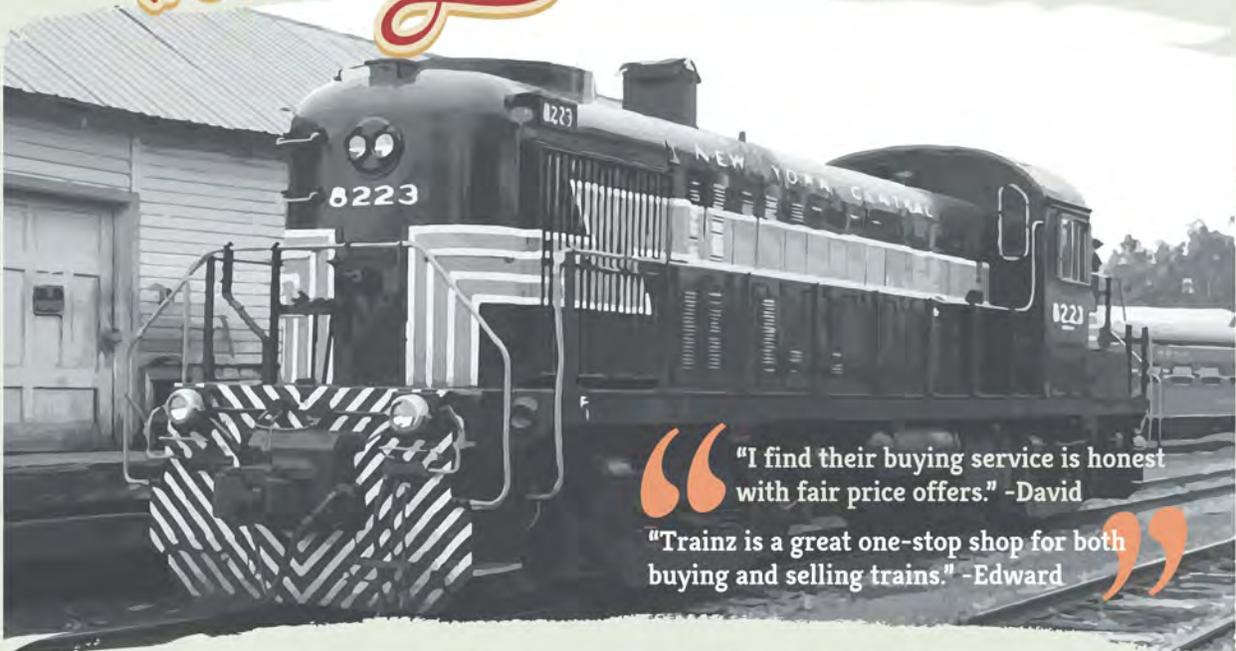
Photo 5: Place the floor supports in front of the walls and on the left and right then add the awning, steps, and chimney.



Photo 6: Lay the roof in, face up, over the awning, steps, and chimney.

The photos with this article are my step by step process to get it "back in the box". I would like to hear from anyone who has other methods for getting this piece, or any others, "back in the box".

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## THE PCA CORNER STORE



### ITEMS FOR SALE BY THE PCA

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.

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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.

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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 \*\*\*

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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.

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#### 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.



**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



## PRODUCT REVIEWS

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

**H**istoric North American Locomotives, an Illustrated Journey, Ken Boyd, 280 pages, softcover, 11 × 8 ½ format, \$29.99, \$44.99 hardcover. Published by Kalmbach media. Full color illustrations throughout.

When I received the book the name of the author stuck in my mind. I searched my book database and determined that I also have his book *The Art of the Locomotive*. I reviewed that book in Volume 15, number 1 of *The Villager*.

This book follows the same format as the aforementioned book in that the left page is a lengthy description of the locomotive. On most of the left pages there is also an engine other than the subject pictured with a short caption. The right hand page is a photo of the locomotive with all of the background except for the roadbed removed.

There is an Introduction and a Historical Perspective before the author launches into his descriptions of each locomotive in eight chapters. The chapters include: Early Locomotives; The Classic, Definitive Locomotive; Transition from Steam to Diesel; and Postwar Technologies to name a few. Each chapter has a three or four paragraph introduction.

The first chapter, of course includes such locomotives as Tom Thumb, Rocket, and John Bull. A fact about the John Bull of which I was unaware was that the first passenger fatality was while riding behind the John Bull. Another little tidbit was the mention of Russian Iron. Per Wikipedia Russian Iron is a type of sheet iron produced in Russia during the 19th and early 20th century. This iron sheeting had a smooth, glossy black surface coating, sometimes greenish-tinged, which did not flake upon bending and made the sheets highly resistant to rusting.

Other locomotives illustrated are: C&O #490 streamlined

Hudson, Milwaukee Road Bi-Polar, No 9908 Burlington Zephyr, and a Rio Grande Southern Galloping Goose.

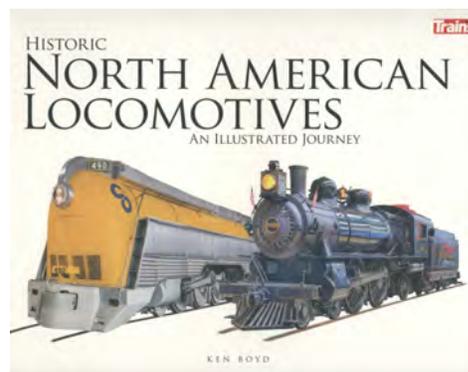
Every photo on the right hand pages are of such quality that they could be framed. The author even ensured that there are no page numbers on those pages, only the illustrated locomotive.

I enjoyed this book as much if not more than the author's previous book and learned a few pieces of trivia. The last piece being that while American locomotives of the 1850's provided a cab for the fireman and engineer the majority of European locomotives did not. The logic behind not providing a cab as noted by the author was that, "the crew would be more alert and attentive outside".

**Historic North American Locomotives** is available from the from Kalmbach Media at:

<https://kalmbachhobbystore.com>.

Simply use the search string Historic North American to navigate to the book's listings. Softcover copies are listed on Amazon at \$21.49. Amazon also lists a Kindle version not noted on Kalmbach's website. Barnes and Noble's website lists the softcover book for \$29.99 and a Nook version for \$16.99.



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**T**rain Crash at Crush Texas, America's Deadliest Publicity Stunt, Mike Cox, 224 pages, softcover, 6 X 9 format, \$21.99. Published by The History Press, a division of Arcadia Publishing. Black & white photos throughout.

The Crash at Crush, as the author calls it, was not an accident. It was a staged crash. It was a publicity stunt as well as a means of generating revenue. The crash was between two American 4-4-0 steam engines colliding head to head at approximately 60 miles per hour. It was the first staged train crash west of the Mississippi river. There had been five previously documented east of the Mississippi.

The crash was sponsored by the Missouri, Kansas, Texas (MKT or Katy) railroad and the brainchild of the general traffic manager, William C Crush. The crash was promoted as a scientific experiment but in actuality it was a huge publicity stunt with an estimated 35,000 paid viewers who paid anywhere from \$2.00 to \$3.50 train fare to get to the crash site. Unfortunately both boilers exploded upon impact sending huge pieces of the engines into the crowd. There were two documented fatalities as well as numerous injuries.

Crush, Texas existed, effectively, for one day. It was an area on the MKT line north of Waco, Texas and away from any civilization. A station and other buildings were built to handle those arriving on the MKT excursion trains. Everything was torn down shortly after the crash.

The book covers the rise of William Crush, the promoter of the crash to the general traffic manager position. It documents very well the publicity created prior to the crash by Crush. The crash chapter describes the aftermath

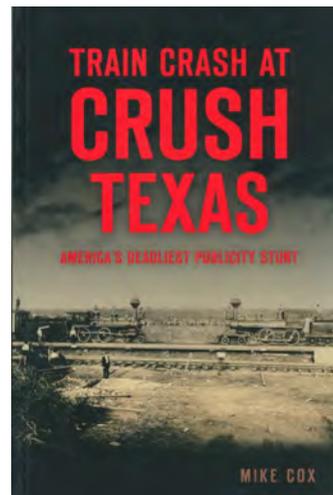
of the boiler explosions including the manner in which to two fatalities lost their lives. He also notes what little liability fallout has been documented. There is also a chapter related to ragtime musician Scott Joplin who wrote *The Great Crush Collision* march shortly after the crash.

An epilogue is usually a summation of what one has just read. The epilogue for this book is different. It provides short biographies of the majority of those mentioned in the book.

The source notes are something I rarely read other than to scan them. In this instance I found additional paragraphs related to specific chapters. Very interesting information not included directly in the book.

There is also a partial list of known staged train crashes, a bibliography, and an index. There is definitely enough information to provide one a jumping off point for additional research.

**Train Crash at Crush Texas** is available directly from Arcadia Publishing. The direct link to the book is: <https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/Products/9781467139342>. Hamilton Books lists it at \$17.95. Amazon lists it in hardback, paperback, and Kindle formats at \$24.03, \$13.30, and \$12.99 respectively. Barnes and Noble also offers the book in hardback, \$32.99; paperback, \$21.99; and Nook, \$11.49 formats.



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